



TIV SWANGE

MUSIC AND DANCE

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By

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Foreword

Swange music and dance is a subject of intense debate however, it has gone beyond such misconceptions of amatory effusions that marred the opulence of Tiv traditional effluvium of the social sanity. It is regrettable that this popular Tiv music which enjoys national and international acceptability is yet to be adequately and properly documented, thus the coming of this scholarly contribution is quite deserving and timely.

RICHARD, CUTTINGS, DON-SAAONDO and NANCY, who have devoted years of their diligent research to bringing to limelight the history of Swange Music and Dance, have provided many details into Swange, Tiv traditional music and dance as well as pioneer Swange musicians for those who would know not merely what Swange is, but how it has come to its present state and its significance to the Tiv society and the entire global community.

Essentially, the book ***TIV SWANGE MUSIC AND DANCE*** is the first of its kind in the area of Music Theatre in all history of Tiv traditional music and dance. Its decipherable, flawless description of Swange and Swange Musicians in reconnoitering the origin and development of this traditional music concept is what has made it stand out distinct as unbiased and the first masterful piece ever written on the subject of Swange.

The Western contumelious colonialists approached all aspects of Tiv Tradition in declamatory treatment, especially Swange Music through the machinations of Christian religion which they brought. Although Swange was viewed as worldly and sensuous in its performance, most western music possesses these qualities even to an unacceptable level. However, some Swange Musicians like Yamuel Yashi, Boniface Orshio, Mike Mbatyelevde, Solomon Abua and host of others persisted tirelessly to take the music to the helms of its splendid apogee.

The authors have taken more than fifteen years to research into this topic and have given the entire Tiv nation and folks as well as the whole world this golden opportunity to read this noble intellectual work.

Obviously, Tiv Swange Music and Dance is a paragon gateway into information on Tiv people, music and dance that readers of all vocations would find informative, educative and laudable. This book therefore comes as a must read for all Tiv people, but particularly for lovers of this popular music worldwide.

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Preface

The colonial rule and western Christian religion brought to Tivland some anomalous permutations of cultural adulteration on the Tiv culture and at the apogee of their operation in the land, life had been arrested, as the horologist, with interjected finger, arrests the beating of the clock. However, the Tiv traditional music veterans put Tiv social life through music and dance on motion like the spirit of that wind whose soft step deepens slumber and rekindled the Tiv harmonious social life.

Importantly, this book is written to introduce to the world Swange music and dance in pages and clear some hazardous misconceptions catalyzed by Christian Religion and Colonialism. The authors therefore, have brought to limelight the hidden treasures of Tiv traditional music talents and the veiled heroes of Tiv music.

The book unravels *The History of Swange Music and Dance* and unveils the *Pioneers of Swange* such as Yamuel Yashi Agbatar Gyur, Soomiyol Anikpa Abiem (Soom), Boniface Orshio Ada Kever Kweri Yeor, Solomon Doki Abua Tortya, Zahan Matar (Chief Commander Mike Mbatyelevde Matar), Christopher Ature Hom Agena, James Udoo Neeryum Kaor Chira (Udoo Mbalagh) and Atsua Anula Jagba (Ajas), among others.

Apparently, due to time and financial constraints, the authors have not researched other areas of Swange music and dance such as other Swange musicians in Tivland like Antyu Abwa, Uwu Abor, Agema Amenger, Phillip Nyitse, Tersoo Kuje, Iorshe Hir, Ability Apuu Abeekaa, Gbagir Asawa and Shamija Aja. However, this has given other researchers the opportunity to delve into such areas and the like that we have overlooked not for lack of knowledge but of funds.

This book is first of its kind in the history of Tiv literature and it is intended to be read in areas of Music Theatre Arts,

History and Nigerian Cultural Studies. The book is also a good reading material for the general public.

Tim Cuttings AGBER

8th August, 2013 AD

Ageva, Mbayongu, Vandeikya

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Dedication

The dedication of this book is rightly made to The Great **Boniface Orshio Ada Kever**, The Legendary **Yamuel Yashi Agbatar Gyur**, The Great **Sebere Ujim Moji** and above all the Flamboyant Warlord **Joseph Cuttings Agber Ligôm Ayom** all of blessed memories.



Boniface Orshio



Yamuel Yashi



Sebele Ujim



Agber Ligôm

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Music is at the helms of the culture of the Tiv people so much that there is virtually any occasion among or involving Tiv people at which one type of Tiv music or the other is not played and therefore, it will not be an aberration to note that the life and philosophy of a Tiv man is not complete without music.

Swange, a spirited music is one of the major types and the most esteemed non-ritual Tiv music that enjoys both local and international patronage. Swange is played in public places and virtually all Christian churches in Tiv world. Significantly, Swange music is treated with noble biasing sentiments but whatever notions nurtured against it, Swange is enjoyed both in Christian Churches and secular gatherings.

The Tiv People

The name Tiv has a dual meaning. Tiv is a culture-group of a people who, by the 1963 census numbered one and a half million, (Makar, 1994; Remi, 1982). Tiv also is the name of the father of all Tiv people, (Makar). More so, the Tiv are an ethnic group who today inhabit quite a substantial portion of the Benue valley. The region extends on both side of the River Benue in central Nigeria, covering an area about 30,000 square kilometers and is located between latitude 7°30' to 8°10' north and longitude 8° to 10° east, (Geri, 2012; Denga, 1988).

Akpede (as cited in Ugbagir & Agber, 2013) noted that the Tiv people are one of the ethnic groups that inhabit the geographical area referred to as the “middle belt” in central Nigeria. Tiv is a name of the person from whom they all descended. They lived in the south-eastern part of Africa with the Bantu tribe. Dispute arose and they broke away from their

Bantu neighbors and according to the legend they crossed the Congo River with the help of Ikyaren.

The Tiv people are traced to the Lumba kindred in the Congo. This area, known for its fertility, was rich with iron ore and with full of game because of the forests that were also there. The Tiv people while there, therefore learnt and became used to a life of game, farming and the production of arms because of the rich mineral resources of the area, (Adule, 2006). Britannica (2010) explained that Tiv are people living on both sides of the Benue River in Nigeria; they speak a language of the Benue-Congo branch of the Niger-Congo family. Abraham (1940) added that the Tiv are a tribe who live south of the River Benue. He further noted that the Tiv is essentially a democrat.

Ker (2002) observed that the Tiv people occupy fourteen local government areas in Benue State. They are also found in large numbers in Nassarawa, Taraba and (somehow) Cross River State.

General Concept of Music

Music is an art that, in one guise or another, permeates every human society. Modern music is heard in a bewildering profusion of styles, many of them are contemporary, others engendered in past eras. Music is a protean art; it lends itself easily to alliances with words, as in song, and with physical movement, as in dance. Throughout history, music has been an important adjunct to ritual and drama and has been credited with the capacity to reflect and influence human emotion. Popular culture has consistently exploited these possibilities, most conspicuously today by means of radio, film, television, and the musical theatre. The implications of the uses of music in psychotherapy, geriatrics, and advertising testify to a faith in its power to affect human behavior, (Britannica, 2010).

Ostensibly, music seems to be a universal mortal social activity, either for its own sake or as part of other activities. Music is not the only one of man's activities to be principally concerned with sound. Language and music differ in organization and purpose, not in basic material: the sounds of language are primarily for conveying specific concepts; the sounds of music are not.

By the way, there are certain basic elements of particular importance to music. William (1979) therefore, examined by identifying that they may conveniently be grouped into three classes:

- Duration
- Pitch and
- Timbre

Apparently, the organization of these elements is referred to as form, which is a musical structure or the arrangements of music into series of similarities and contrasts that a listener may hear as a substantial uncut.

In essence, music has an element known as *duration* and since a piece of music unfolds in time unlike painting, the temporal aspects of sound are of crucial importance. The basic concept of duration therefore, is rhythm that is the organization of sound in time, which Swange music as a form of Tiv traditional music has.

All music has rhythm. If the rhythm contains a regular succession of pulses, these pulses are referred to as beat; the organization of beats of equal duration into small groups (usually divisible by two or three) is called meter. Although, all music has rhythm, not all music is called its tempo, (William, 1979).

More so, pitch as another element of music is the highness or lowness of a given sound; and a sound with a fixed pitch is called tone. Though, not all music is concerned with pitch

and the rhythmic drumbeating, handclapping or foot stamping of many tribal people clearly lacks any well-defined pitch; Swange music has pitch.

William (1979) explains that the difference between two pitches is called interval. A succession of single pitches makes up a melody, and the difference between two successive pitches is therefore called melodic interval.

Importantly, another element of music called timbre is the distinctive sound of a voice or instrument, also known as music color.

The moral status of music is of course a controversial issue among philosophers, thinkers, authors and the general society due to various somnolent nulling moral notions and ingenious moral views about the conception.

In the light of the above promulgation, William (1979) views that besides its inferior status among the arts; music has been influenced by moral considerations. Music is an invisible and therefore, in a sense, a mystical entity; the connection between music and magic is reelected in the fortunes of the Latin word for “song” cantus, which turns up in such words as “incantation” and “enchant”.

Essentially, music has instruments used in playing it and therefore, anything that can produce sound may be used as a musical instrument, however; professionals of music use the term musical instrument to generally confine to objects made or adapted to serve musical purposes primarily.

William (1979) examined that nearly all the instruments of modern Euro-American music are descended from Oriental or African forebears.

Generally, instruments are divided basically into five classes according to the nature of the sound producing agent and each class is in turn divided and subdivided according to features

important to its individual character. The five classes or divisions of musical instruments are:

Idiophones – The idiophones, sometimes called self-sounders combine in one element the properties of vibrator and resonator. Instruments in this class include *kwen* (gong), *indyer*, *gbagede*, *ilyu*, clappers, slit drums, *asav* (sticks), tubes, rattles, jingles, shells, *amem* (bells), *gbange* (xylophones) and metallophones.

Aerophones – These are also called wind-sounders. They are divided according to the way in which the column or body of air is set in vibration. *Gida* (trumpet), *ahev*, *akya* (flute), *korugh* (horn), harmonium, mouthorgan, bagpipe, *azongu* and the like are among musical instruments in this division.

Membranophones – These are skin-sounders, most of which are called drums. They are classified from several different points of view. Musical instruments in this division include drums(*gbande*, *genga*, *ajo*, *akerangu*, *kunkun*, *indyer genga* and *tsôrug*), just to mention a few.

Cordophones – They are string-sounders plucked with fingers or with a plectrum, struck with hammers or mallets, bowed or sounded by wind. The musical instruments in this class include *adigyuve*, *songu-songu* and *jita* (guitar) among others.

Electrophones – These are instruments in which an electrical current aids in the amplification of mechanically produced tone, as in electric guitar.

Tiv Traditional Music

Tiv traditional music and dance has suffered a callous and conscienceless brute from the colonial masters and the Christian Religious vendors of the west and as such, the nonpreservation and documentation of the Tiv traditional music and dance invariably became one factor that evaded the status of oral and calligraphic tradition in the making of Tiv philosophy, science and technology, (Agber, & Mngutyô, 2013).

The concept of Tiv traditional music is quite broad in nature and so entwined that a Tiv man does not talk about music, singing and dancing separately. Tiv traditional music (kwaghkuhan ú Tiv) is a form of music involving song (imo), dance (amar) and music (kwaghkuhan) that originates from a Tiv man or Tiv people of any geographical location in the world.

Bordering the Benue River, geographically bulging on either side, the Tiv people have developed a musical style which reflects the individuality of their customs and thought to an interestingly marked degree. A semi-Bantu people, the Tiv have combined the true essentials of the arts of their race with a highly developed sense of mimicry, not unlike that found in the shadow pla of Java. This sense of mimicry has no time barriers, however, and in its ancient god-worship form carries with it the jerky rhythm patterns and sharp dancing movements, now moulded by the twentieth century and European contact, but still leaving the angular fingers and sharp percussion crying for favors from Aôndo, their God of the heaven and the father of Tiv and Uke, (Lane, 1954).

The Tiv traditional music, a phenomenon quite appealing to the urgent temper of the aged folks and youth, capable of uprooting unpleasant and heavy sensation that sit at the hearts of men, is an institution of its own organized into different forms.

In any case, Tiv traditional music recognized three sections of music and dance, be it in any form. *Imo Yilan, Amar á Kohol; Imo Dughun, Amar or Ishor í Karen; and Imo Mirin and Amar a Wan*. This entails organization, practice and performance.

Notably, in the beginning, the Tiv had their oral poetry or traditional music and dance classified into five major groups. Tsenôngu (2007) in his opinion on the five ages of Tiv oral poetry argued that the five ages are: Gercham, Aginde Agena, Bam Ginde, Tarker Golozo and Obadiah Orkor. It is important to admit that his argument is imbued with meretricious facts worthy of noting.

The Tiv traditional music, whether considered in ages or forms and otherwise, it was basically classified into Imo Shagba, Imo Biam (Byam), Ange, Imo Gbanyi and Imo Zaar.

In the Imo shagba classification of Tiv traditional music and dance, the most prominent artistes were Aginde Agena Leke Ndyar Chinge Yegh Aka of tar Gaav in Tiv world. This is in line with the argument of Tsenôngu (2007) who identified this artiste under the age of Aginde Agena and further explained that the artiste praised himself too because he had also accomplished nobility by fulfilling the status-attracting requirements of the day; inciting that for instance, he bought a horse, possessed an Indyer drum, married numerous wives, had an endless farm and built a large compound.

Other prominent artistes in the Imo shagba classification of the Tiv traditional music included Guusu Aie Ayom Niambe Kyura Gyar Anyi, who sang for himself and other *asagbair* (richmen) or his class like Gyura Duku Agema of Nongov, Labe Gyuse Agbatar of Mbayion, Tor Yogbo Tsafa of Iharev and the like.

The Imo Biam artistes who were very prominent in this class included Anche (Ance) Igbya Azegheze (Igbyaaze), Madza (Maza) Nomhwange, Amee Jorpo (Ijor-Po), Amee Yongur, Gbaseera (Gbaseghera) Dajo, Kuje Yum, Matthew Boyô, Hemen man Dondu and the flamboyant Akile Bende, just to mention a few. Notably, some of these Imo Biam artistes swayed to Ange before their retirement or death. The Ange superstars included Utuku Agire, Fyer Ugeze Kpen, Chado Hôngur, Iorkegh Igbya (different from Iorgyer Igba who sang with Yamuel Yashi), Madza Nomhwange and host of others.

In the *Imo Gbanyi*, the greatest originating veterans and artistes included Yamuel (Yanmoel, Yang'mo-er, Yange me-er) Yashi Agbatar Gyur, James Udoo Neeryum Kaor Chira (Udoo Mbalagh), Iorav Gber Kyôbo, Godwin Adigô, Mkaaïor Agwagwa, Iorlunmun Ankya and many others in this category.

The *Imo Zaar*, like Imo Gbanyi has multiple forms of music and dance aligned in this classification of the Tiv traditional music and dance, and as a result, so many great artistes are found in this class. The forms of music and dance under this classification vary significantly and include *Genyi*, *Ange*, *Iyolgbeer* and *Mzangem*.

In the last classification, artistes here include Tsenôngu Togo (the Gogoro music and dance originator), Kerkaan Adamgbe Adasu Jov Ayaga (the originator of Azov music and dance), Tarker Golozo, Obadiah Kehemen Orkor, Tondù Kumbur, James Ngishe, Akaan Gbagbongum Adede, the popular Adema Igbughur, Mwuaga Ahua, Pevikyaa Zegi, Oralu Diô, and very numerous others past and present.

On the part of composition, Keil (1979) observed that in the beginning the Tiv composed only gercham and ibiamegh. Ostensibly, without traces of ostentation and aspersion, Keil's observation is one that suffers from obsolescence and

reasonable lack of sufficient knowledge in this particular area of Tiv traditional music.

The tradition of Tiv songs was aligned in norms that songs were sectioned into parts by purpose or reasons. This was first in the structure of *indiran imo* or *mnder* (lead) and *iryumun imo* or *mrumun* (response). The verse of the song is *imo* and the chorus is *icham*, and the two can be sung independently. *Gercham* (*gercam*) is a plurality oriented concept of the chorus. The lead singer *ngor imo* (raise a song) and the entire choir whether organized conventionally or not, *ta gercham* (choruses), which means the crowd or multitude sing the chorus in determined unison. *Ger* is shout or chorus and *cham* (*icham* or *icam*) is song.

Apparently, what we are arguing here is that the Tiv people believe that their forefathers and pioneering *mbaamoov* used to compose songs and some songs though, were composed as only choruses; any song that had a chorus, the chorus was sang as *icham* by one or few persons and as *gercham* by many or great multitude of people.

Essentially, Tiv people used to *dugh* (compose) *imo* (song), *tionimo* (short song), *icham*, *gercham*, *asôngu* (invectives) and *azaam sha alô-alô* (orderly correct). Look at the two examples below:

Mnder	Ku Saimon Ugba
	Mo kwagh u a zem iyol
	Mo (me) pase ior mba hen Tar wam
	Ka or a kpe ve nan ya Tor
	Mo i nam ú wam me ya zwa wam aa
	<i>Ôr nen a Ter Aôndo</i>
Mrumun	<i>A lumun a imo yam</i>
	<i>Mbazan Jôv Mama oo</i>
	<i>Mama kaa er or udoon or u Mbalagh</i>
	<i>Awa imo a ter Maakyar</i>

*Misa Anjembe Akawe u
Dôbur jee a ungwa er
M dughun imo yô
Misa Agbo oo
Lukor Agbo nam wundu man akôv*

*Ka lun mo er yange ior a gema ôrun
Er mfa imo i Gbanyi i gberen yô
Mpase Gbafan Cen (Chen) u Kuna
Or-Mbajôr Ger, alu u sember
Ican a yam kôv ôô*

*Aniwya apirashe
Gbem lu a nongu mayange ga
Tyôture Zege Or-Mbaakune
Tar nam ikyur hen hyura yô
Mo kwagh hembam aa*

Neeryum Kaor Cira (Udoo Mbalagh) November 19, 1963

*Kwagh hembam
Me za kohol gbaga
Kwagh hembam
Me za kohol gbaga*

This song is sung as a single
song without a chorus

*lor ne i gbam sôngun tsô
lor ne i gbam sôngun tsô
Denvihin u lorbo
M zenden kpa*

*M tagher m nenge
Or ngu a ya iti er
M ngu hembra-Tyô
Ga oo wan Mbayongu Kwase wam aa*

Iortim Ikya Genyi (Ucikipôôkô) August 12, 1979

Musical Instruments Used in Swange

Significantly, Swange music is played with the following instruments: *gbande* (drums), *Gida* (trumpet) and *kwen* (gong). With Western influence, guitars and percussions were introduced into Swange music in 1974 by Solomon Doki (King One Abua).

Gbande



Gbande is a membranophonic wooden musical instrument made of artistically carved wooden pipetry and is covered with animal skin. The Tiv traditional *gbande* produces pellucid and crystal musical diapason beyond nugatory and ineffectual uncultured sounds by probity and candor of its alluring rhythm to the predilection of the listener.

The Tiv *gbande* is a hollow cylinder of wood or – in advanced Tiv technology – metal, with skin or vellum stretched upon ring-like frames fitted over one end, or each end, kept taut with hoops and cords, and played by beating the head or the heads if it is double-sided, with *ave* (hands) or *asav á gbande* (drumsticks).

The construction of *gbande* is a highly technological function that demands skills and training to do and to perfect. The history of *gbande* making or construction dates back to about 1758 under a renowned stone mason and blacksmith Gyar Anyi. In the chronicles of this historic traditional musical instrument, one of the most skillful engineers of the 18th century, a professional Indyer architect and inventor of *Kun-Kun* drum was Agba Zugu Agire.

The *gbande* belongs to the African instrument category called the membranophones. A membrane material is stretched

over a frame and it is attached through pegs or hides strips. Drums are the most common membranophones and they are the most popular instruments in Tiv nation and the entire Nigeria.

Invariably, the sizes of *agbande* vary from *ichôugh* to *birim* (*abirim*) and *byer* (Indyer) *genga*, which means from very small ones to ones that reach 11 to 13.2 feet and their shapes vary from cylindrical and cask, even in *desi* form (x shape).

Essentially, the position of playing *agbande* depends on size, combination and shape. Some of the *agbande* are placed on the ground, on a stand, between the knees, or slung over the shoulder of the player. Moreover, in some cases, two or more *agbande* are combined and lay on a platform for the player who is dexterous in managing the beating and tone of the respective drums.

Importantly, in the Tiv traditional technology, the purpose for which a drum is made and meteorological conditions of the geographical location where it will be played are the fundamental determining factors for choosing the type of materials that will be used for the construction of the *agbande*.

The best wood used in carving the *gbande* frame is *Gbaaye*, which moth, other insects and water cannot destroy. Other wooden materials include *Kongbande*, which is lightweight and long lasting, *mho*, *haa*, *ichamegh* and *gbagbongum*. In terms of the *imyandé* (singular) or *amandé* (plural), *kpine*, *kpikyegh*, *gbaaye*, *baverakpua*, *jiagba*, *alomade* and *ikpyoughkue* are used and in some cases, metals are useful tools. *Kyôvur* (hides, membrane or skin) of *ivyo* (goat), *yôngu* (sheep), *kusugh* (electric fish), *yar* (deer), *ihyo*, *kyuran* or *mtswenkya* is used for the membrane. In addition, *Kwagir*, *kwangeihyo* and *waia* [*waya*] (metal wire) are used for the cords. The Tiv traditional chemicals used for the preparing of the skins include *ceerme* (*chegher-megh*), *aloevera* and *kpagh* (camwood).

Gida



Gida is a borrowed musical instrument. Ancient Tiv traders dealing in horse merchandize first saw a double-mouthed alaketa (trumpet), which was a royal musical instrument blown to

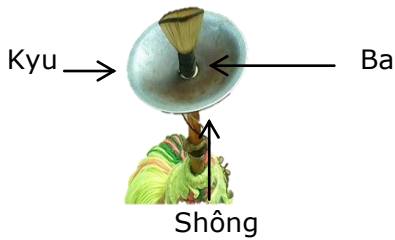
herald the arrival of Hausa Kings in *Gwebe* (Gombe) and *Aku Uka* about 1872.

The Tiv Gida is a wood and brass wind musical instrument sounded by lip vibration against a cup mouthpiece. This lip throbbled aerophone is made from a variety of materials and it takes years of practice to be able to use Gida perfectly. The instrument comprises of wood, brass, mild steel, silken materials and designer hides.

Essentially, Gida was modified into what it is today by Antyu Abwa around October 1917. Moreover, the best brains in the use of Gida in Tiv nation were Boniface Orshio, Antyu Abwa himself, Uwu Abor, Anyoon Yav, Ajo Ugor, Ikpya Ugba Agire and Amindi Gwa Tule, just to mention a few.

Gida, a witching aerophonic musical instrument with simmering efficacy of candor and originality is the prime factor in the embellishment of all socially inclined Tiv traditional music forms of both Christian and secular. Since its modification into what it is today, its magical centrifugation and sly dynamism of its convincing sonorous prodigy has made *Gida* a key musical instrument.

The substantial tradition of the diverse musical tones of Gida suites into almost every form of Tiv traditional music.



In the profound and chilling solitude of Tiv traditional music philosophy, the rigid adherence to its conventionalities rudely reminded the flamboyant Swange artistes of the Hausa Alaketa's peccadilloes and

meretricious tone that could sometimes mar the music norm. Apparently, it was this that led to the invention of the modern day Gida, which has four major notes subdivided into about twelve notes.

Gida produces amazingly sweet sounds capable of assuaging the musical thirst of any human soul. When played or blown, the tones ascend in ambrosial essence that disarms anger and softens asperity and persuades the inimical spirit of man into dreamy silence and rejuvenated redolence of integrity.

The traditional engineers make *Gida* in different sizes and colors. The musical instrument is not a single-made unit; it is constructed in parts and assembled. The different parts include *kyure*, *ato á íshôngu (bata)*, *shôngu*, *ahúra*, (*akya-Gida*), *tyam and ur (icha)*; and these parts are made of or from different materials.

The mouthpiece is made of a special *gyomugh*-grass; *bata* is made of *azurfa* (silver) although, some are made of mild steel or plastic. *Shôngu* is made from *Bashi* (brass), the *ahura* section is made from *kuegh* or *jiagba* wood and coated with *kyuran* skin, and the *tyam* is made of *kôukôsu* coated with *ur* of any attractive colors.

Essentially, with the advent of the western technology in musicology, it is worth putting the Gida on the English keyboard or making it a separate electronic musical instrument whereby

only keys will be pressed to produce the desired sounds instead of straining the mouth and lungs of the *Gidanist* (trumpeter).

Putting of Gida on the keyboard as a separate segment can be done through:

- Government of Benue State sponsorship
- Individual sponsorship
- Organizations sponsorship such as churches, companies or NGOs

Invariably, this can be achieved by financing researches conducted by Tiv traditional sound engineers to come out with Electronic Gida (EG-TV-10). Another alternative will be by contracting Asian sound engineers from China, Japan or Korea to produce the electronic Gida with a concise operating manual with the supervision of Benue Council for Arts and Culture.

Kwen



The machinations of relentless western mountebanks in the oscillations of their human genius could not stop witty innovations of the veterans of Tiv traditional music spanning from the world of music to science and technology, which gave rise to the invention of kwen.

Kwen (gong) is a metallic musical instrument named according to its *kweng-kweng* sound. The instrument is made in different sizes and types such as *kwen gbar mom* (one way gong), *kwen igbiar íhar* (two way gong), *ngôkwen* (female kwen), *cembe (chembe) kwen* and *nomkwen* (male kwen). *Kwen* is made of HSS (high speed steel), LSS (low speed steel) and mild steel. The position of the player depends on the size and the purpose of *kwen* in a given music.

Jenkwe (1998) opined that originally, the basic outfit of instruments in a Swange band consisted of three drums: a low-pitched bass lead drum ngo gbande, two high-pitched smaller drums, a two-way metal gong *kwen*, and an alagaita. However with a burgeoning sophistication such as we have nowadays in everything, some groups do have anything from three to ten drums, including those of foreign make, one or two electric guitars, amplifiers and loudspeakers that boost the musical sound, and an assortment of percussive instruments that increase the texture of the sound. The drums are played in combination with taking on new and significant cultural meanings as a “respectable” music and dance.

Incidentally, since the attempt to introduce western musical instruments into Swange music by King One Abua with the support of Major Adingi and Udoo Mbalagh, the western percussions and guitars do not flawlessly fit into the tradition of Swange music. Although, people tried to integrate the western musical instruments into Tiv traditional music, like the initiator of Swange Reggae Christopher Ature Hom, Zahan Matar (Mbatyelevde), Fidel Shamel, Zule Zuu, Anongu Data, Samuel Amase and B5 just to mention a few, Swange has refused to go smoothly with these instruments of the west.

Forms of Music that Preceded Swange Music and Dance

The institution, invention, organization or origination of some Tiv traditional music and dance forms were wrought out of intense and tragic experiences.

Tiv traditional music and dance has contributed immeasurably to life and constitutes life and living not only to a Tiv man but also to the human soul of the entire world populace.

Hagher (2003) confidently asserted that we can say that all Tiv dances contribute to physical and emotional release. He further explained that this is because dance itself possess the

unique opportunity for a variety of emotional expression. The dancers are able to release otherwise inexpressible thoughts and ideas, left off steam, and also resolve social conflicts.

Essentially, there existed so many Tiv traditional music and dance forms or groups before the awesome emergence of Swange music. Notably, these music and dances that preceded Swange music and dance included Ibyamegh, Ange, Ingyôugh (ingôugh), Ankeredede, Diga and Girinya among others.

Ibyamegh

Ibyamegh was a Tiv Religious Rite crowned with Poor, which tradition demanded that the intending initiator must be a product of *Yam'she* (*exchange marriage*) who would first consult the High Priest (*or-Byam, orakombo-Biam or Tor-Biam*) with official presents such as *Bua* Tiv (Tiv cow).

The Ibyamegh Religious Rite was accompanied with music and dance also referred to as Ibyamegh. Songs pattern accompanying this form of music and dance is called Imo Biam (songs of Biam). The most popular composers of Imo Biam include Anche Igbaaze, Dagba, Akile Bende, Madza Nomhwange and Ameer Jorpo.

Nyitse (2006) examined that Biamegh is the parent stock of most Tiv panegyrics. Akpede (2010) admits that Biamegh songs are songs of greatness. They are all attributed to *or u dughun amo or zabia*, a composer of songs.

Ange

Ange, from the time of their evolution into Tiv traditional music and dance by Utuku Agire till date have not significantly entertained changes both in context, contents and intent. The term Ange carries a plural form and is used only as plural.

Ange are basically dance oriented, and are more concerned with traditional aspects of Tiv worldview and life,

(Nytse, 2006). Nytse further explains that the Ange song form freed the society from the unquestioning belief in age and sex as major determiners of one's role in the society. Ange performers were concerned with inculcating communal values as against individualism.

Ingyôugh

Ingyôugh literally means kwashiorkor; a disease that makes one emaciate and develop a potbelly so fat and large. The Tiv people used to *tuhwa or* (deride somebody) "*nenge alu ka hi angbor er Ingyôugh kôr ú we*" (look at your potbelly like you are suffering from Ingyôugh disease).

Kwashiorkor is a condition caused by severe protein deficiency. Kwashiorkor is most often encountered in developing countries in which the diet is high in starch and low in proteins. It is common in young children weaned to a diet consisting chiefly of cereal grains, cassava, plantain, and sweet potato or similar starchy foods. The condition in children was first described in 1932. The term kwashiorkor means "deposed child" ("deposed" from the mother's breast by a newborn sibling) in one African dialect and "red boy" in another dialect. The latter term comes from the reddish orange discoloration of the hair that is characteristic of the disease. Other symptoms include dry skin and skin rash, potbelly and edema, weakness, nervous irritability, anemia, digestive disturbances such as diarrhea, and fatty infiltration of the liver, (Britannica, 2010).

The Tiv traditional doctors used to hospitalize the Ingyôugh patients, giving them medications and proper feeding. In the process of time, these Ingyôugh patients organized themselves in a group that evolved into a cult. Essentially, in order to overcome stigmatization, the Ingyôugh cult organized a play group that use to dance and entertain themselves and other village folks.

In addition, because these fellows looked quite hilarious, their dance was humorous and they instituted regulations associating with myths and witchcraft, which



provided that spectators who watch them or the dance and laughed must pay a fine and failure to do so will lead to the contraction of Ingyôugh sickness by the spectator. Importantly, few Ingyôugh patients like Izua Gbe and Anshira Akuji discovered that their calamity became a source of income and as a result introduced proper dancing steps into the music.

Apparently, Ingyôugh evolved into a comedic form of Tiv traditional music and dance pioneered by Anshira Akuji about 1902, which grew in stages between 1919 and 1931 into the 1960s and promoted by Benue Council for Arts and Culture. Ingyôugh, which was at first named *Ishav* or *Shav* was popularized by the legendary Izua Gbe Kyôgundu Zerem between 1950 and 1955. The most popular Ingyôugh dancers include the legendary Izua Gbe Kyôgundu of tar Shangev-Tiev, Iorkyaan Aga of Mbagyar in tar Mbayongu, Ankyeghem-mbaman (Uhaa Iormba), Azege Gbamngir Nima Kyur, Boniface Lahave Kave Akaa, Torkuma Aume Hom Gbagir, Mbakorlumun Dughior, Akaa Yina Aku Lan, Terngu Adaan, Ayisa Anjiir, Gwaza Izua Gbe, Mngunengen Mase Chaver Gbagir Nima who was the most popular female dancer and Atoo Dyako Gbe among others.

Akpede (2010) explained that Ingyôugh is a vigorous dance for men which entail severe body distortions, noting that

Ingyôugh is one of the Tiv traditional dances that have gained international recognition. He further noted that the group featured at the Negro Festival in Dakar, Senegal, in 1964, as well as other national and international festivals.

Hagher (1980) describes Ingyôugh as a vigorous dance for men which entail severe body distortions, as dancers while keeping beat to music, suddenly seem to throw all their limbs in disarray, the face is distorted with the eyes sunk, nose dilated and tongue limply hanging from the mouth, hands are held out at stiff angles to the body, the stomach is swollen and made to extend at unusual angles to the body; the effect of these dancers, is as if they are walking corpses.

Ingyôugh had stage names such as Anyam Ade who is the group leader, Gbakaan Jebu, Ubyer Kya, Ankina Dan, Ikpyakar Ato and Ankyarkyar just to mention a few. The dance has heavy costumes like ikpya shimbe, bibi, akpagher, tsa-bua, akoor and guv. Dancers dress in *Anger* cloth or any other prescribed dress.

Ankeredede

Hagher (2003) admitted that this song and dance taunt the lazy young men who did not contribute to the upkeep of the house, but made impossible demands on their housewives and mistresses demanding that only choice meats be prepared with their meals.

The most tantalizing ankeredede (Ichegher) artistes included Agoho Agber Ligôm, the flamboyant Sameul Orsar Jeje popularly known as Anbutu Karua (Karuwa), Iornyenge Igbyerave Aninyon, Sase Aninyon Kura, Gbaa Achakpa Ngôkyegh Anshungu, Orga Gbir, Nzuul Chia Agidi, Vershima Nzuul and Tartenger Adikpo.

Ankeredede music and dance is the last form of Tiv traditional music and dance that marked the end of the second

generation Tiv music. Significantly, it will do us well, for the sake of clarity to delve into understanding these generations of Tiv music.

The kwaghalom songs, music and dance marked the beginning of the first generation Tiv music, which ended with lbyamegh. The chronicles of the second generation Tiv music and dance incepted from Ange to Ankeredede. Apparently, the third generation started from Gbanyi to Swange. Astonishingly, Swange music and dance has stood tall and high, dynamically making the fourth generation Tiv traditional music and dance, and could it please our dear souls to think, not with traces of meretricious conceptions, that we have come to the end of Tiv traditional music, nothing more to be added, just harmonious adornments.

Diga

Diga, literarily is a borrowed term from English digger. The Tiv term for diga is called *AtseNór* (elephant hoe). *Diga* is a farm tool also used in construction, which falls in the class of *Bwagi* (*Bogi* or *Bwadi*), *Kpera-Ba*, *Gbyom Gater* and '*Shom í shin* 'Nya.

Diga is a memetic dance for both men and women, and was introduced when forced labour was organized by the colonial government during the 30s to build the railways and mine the tin in Jos Plateau, (Hagher, 2003). He also admits that a digger is an indispensable implement in construction, and it is this expression in recreating work situations that render the potency of dance as agent of physical and emotional release.

The term Diga evolved into a form of music and dance initiated by Viashima Alô from Mbausu in *tar* Mbera, Akighir Tswam Ayu, the legendary Paregh Adaga and Dodo Aswe from *tar* Iharev. According to the veterans (during a verbal interview

with Viashima, 1995) the idea of this music and dance was conceived in June 1929 to reduce tension from forced labor.

Girinya

Girinya is a traditional cult music and dance strictly for men and women of valor distinguished by their dexterity in Ityav (war), Biem (organized group hunting) and general adventures. Invariably, to be initiated into this music and dance, you must be *nomor* or *nomkwase* (strong man or strong woman), implying that you must have in your lifetime accomplished great feat and killing of an enemy or enemies in battles (ityav); or killing of nyam-azov (spirit beast) like Lion, Deer, Hyena or Elephant in a hunting competition (Biem) or in an uvaan-ú-yer-an (deadly deserting jungle).

Nyitse (2006) reported that the Girinya did not originate in Tiv land. It was borrowed from the Kwa-speaking peoples of Ogoja in the late 19th century. Borrowed by the Tiv of Gaav and Kunav, Girinya was used to mobilize warriors to repulse the Kwa during wars in the late 19th century. She further notes that Girinya depends on drum language, accompanied by the horns, which only the initiate can decipher and though membership of Girinya cult is not restricted, only few women are initiates.

Girinya dance today is started by highlighting a solo dancer moving towards musicians. He stops abruptly on a pre-arranged signal usually by listening to the drum, (Akpede, 2010). However, the first thing involved in the starting of this music and dance is blowing of horns imaginatively following beating of the drum before the dancer comes in.

Musical instruments involved in this music and dance are korugh (horn), *gbande* and *bibi* (shatters). *Korugh* comes in the types of *ngôkor* and *kpyamkor*; the drum in *ngôgbande* or *nomgbande* and the *bibi* in the type of its colors as *bibi í il* (black

bibi) or *bibi í nyian* (red *bibi*). Dancers have their descriptive stage or performing names such as Tsatughkaka (tsa-tugh-ka-ka), Mkurembakpevke'she (mkurem-gba-kpev-ken-ishe), Kornyaakaka and the fearful one Kpankpanmajingeringe (kpan-kpan-maji-nger-ing), which means one who does everything except sexual intercourse but is not impotent.

The biggest names in the Girinya dance in Tivland were Abaya Kor, Ngôkugh Ura, Ageva Jija, Chivan Utange (one of the greatest Girinya dancers who killed himself with the machete during a dance competition), Anyagh Ujim, Ama Ikwe, Ukôm Miande, Tion Agendô Ugba, Udô Yaji, Hyumbe Kakure of Mbawuar, Ayôô Yiye, Kough Ukete, Anbutu Karua, Kazever Ikpa, Asôngu Kurugh Agba and Imbor Agbuushu among others.

CHAPTER TWO

Introduction

Like *Girinya* Dance, which majority of the Nigerian populace think of as a cultural dance that is unaccustomed with peace and humanity, Swange music is suffering a serious misconception from a great number of people who think of it as a traditional music that is unaccustomed with decency and morality.

Apparently, most researchers and authors have viewed Swange music in the light of indecency and defiance apart from late Professor Jenkwe of University of Abuja.

Hagher (2003) observed that Gbanyi dance is a dance of defiance as perhaps all of the Gbanyi dances, which operated in early sixties and into seventies.

In the opinion of Akpede (2010), Swange is one of the youngest Tiv dances; initially called Gbanyi, a name which depicts a character with a wayward disposition. He further noted that Tiv Native Authority with its headquarters in Gboko considered Swange too immoral because of its sex symbolism.

Akpede is invariably wrong in his opinion to admit that the Tiv Native Authority considered Swange too immoral because of its sex symbolism; it was Kpingi dance that the TNA was against, even then at the death memorial of Major Adingi's mother, Kpingi was officially warranted to exist by HRH Akperan Orshi Kur (Tor Tiv III).

Swange music is the most decent, popular and loved music of the Tivman that will or cannot be destroyed till the ends of the world since it survived the religious and colonial invasions on the Tiv culture or cultural music and dance and survived all derogations and intratraditional attacks through the ages unto the modern day.

The Colonial and Western Religious tyrants in uncircumcised purpose brought a cruel objurgation on Tiv traditional music in a disfiguring disguise however; the execrable villainy of the West perpetrated by men of dilettante minds became subdued by hardened persistence of the Swange music.

Yamuel Yashi, a flamboyant Swange musician lavishly endowed with genius and naturally decorated in gorgeous splendor with gleaming escutcheon of literati – seen, not with the eye of the eyes but eye of the ears and heart in his composition of Swange music songs – was able, to some extent quell, the hortatory moonshine and the homeless wind of the heartless perfidy on Tiv Religious Faith and Tiv traditional music by the Colonial rule.

Swange music is a subject of serious debate especially when it comes to its origin and survival over more than a century of its existence. Significantly, Swange music started its evolution process as Ange by Utuku Agire in January 28, 1897. Notably, Ange is not Swange but one of the forms of Tiv traditional music from which Gbanyi music came through *Gbanyi ú mirin* auspices and evolved into Swange from the concept of sangen á Sange ishor or amar.

Hagher (as cited in Nyite, 2006) viewed Ange as ‘slanderous rumors’, where two quarrelling parties engage each other with songs and broadcast the vices of each in a bid to shame the other. Nyitse (2006) observed that like all Tiv songs, Ange are basically dance oriented. Like Biamegh, they are more concerned with traditional aspects of Tiv worldview and life. Ange was performed by everyone in contrast to Biamegh which was performed by wealthy Biamegh initiates. Ange was used to compose dirges about individuals as well as the passing away of a whole way of life as the norms and values of traditional society were being eroded.

Ange as of the time of its origin in 1897 and the time of religious attack on it in 1911 and its total weakening in 1917, the music and dance remained focused on sanitization of moral decadence in Tivland.

Obviously, Ange was not a medium devised for slandering, rumoring or disrespect mortal personality; it was hinged on the unveiling of secret villainies, purported human peccadilloes and general anomalous moral deviations hence the artistes and composers realized the human fear of shame, mockery and disgrace especially among Tiv folks and their psychological, emotional and physiological effects.

Any insurgence or moral decadence trailing the society the Ange musicians composed songs that exposed either the evil or the evildoer to bring the society under moral control by using what was known as '*asôngu*' (plural) '*ishôngu*' (singular), which was a polite form of challenge for the purpose of change from bad acts to good deeds.

For instance, as noted by Agber (a verbal discussion with Uge, June 8, 1993), a man in *Ukan* clan who had sexual intercourse with his daughter was brought to his admonishing and correction by Ange composed by Fyer Uge. The *asôngu* composed to check this immorality is as paraphrased below:

Wan éu Kwaghneng' (Kwagh Nenge)
Mor akur á shee (ashe) er
Ikyegh urugh wan ken iji
Anibumaor kpaa wan na
Nyande ken anbeba kyur shun
Mase ôrun ltyô na
Mbagbaya cingé (chingé) ne
Ikyur yough kuma
Anini daya
Ne mba akpaa-angôr mban ne zua í ve
Ne mba akpaa-angôr mban ne zua í ó ...

Though, Ange found its origin in Kunav axis, it spread its talons to other parts of the Tiv Nation and enjoyed the participation of many artistes like Wuhe Ikyambe Agbee who was also one of the first Shen (Ishen) composers in Kunav with Kasar Agashua and later swayed to *Manyi* dance, Kankwe Zungu Ati Liam Adigô, Acwen (Atswen) Daber, Ifyer Ugeke Kpen, Cado (Chado) Hôngur and Adema Igbyughur who later concentrated on his *Akya* and many others.

Ange is one of the oldest Tiv traditional dances. Tiv people believe that the first or their oldest music and dance emanated from kwagh-alom (folktales) and kikya songs. *Ibyamegh* (Biamegh) music is also one of the early comers.

Swange music has played a vital role not only in the Tiv society but also in other societies of the world in general. It provides entertainment and emotional release, and it accompanies activities ranging from social to religious ceremonies.

Swange music is a very popular Tiv music and dance that is played all over Tiv nation and everywhere Tiv folks settle in large numbers, (Agber & Ingyoroko, 2012).

Jenkwe (1998) observes that Swange, a flexible, adaptive music and dance that belongs to the popular category, has flourished more than any other dance, over all of Tiv land. He further affirms that Swange has so flourished that virtually every town has a resident Swange band group that entertains its clientele in the evenings.

History of Swange Music

The accounts of chronicles of the form of Tiv traditional music into what is known today as Swange music was an evolution of different genres of traditional music in stages, from kwagh-alom or kikya songs, music and dance through *Ibyamegh*

and Ange to a dynamic and more refined hybrid stage of a special form called Swange.

The chronicle of Ange in its evolution into a form of Tiv traditional music known as Gbanyi, which in the process of time evolved into Swange under Yamuel (Yanmoel) Yashi Agbatar Gyur, is a historic promulgation that swims in confirmable facts.

Essentially, Swange was birthed as Gbanyi by Ange at the apogee of Tiv social civilization move (TSCM) that swept across the entire Tiv world that suddenly slumped into the ambushade of the Western Christian Religion and colonial cold war.

Gbanyi, which literally means basin, was an important asset in Tiv homes. Gbanyi was a domestic utensil introduced by the British in all their colonies for domestic and agricultural use.

Many changes accompanied British rule: Western education, the English language, and Christianity spread during the period; new forms of money, transportation, and communication were developed; and the Nigerian economy became based on the export of cash crops, (Britannica, 2010).

Incidentally, the changes that accompanied the British rule included the Tiv medium of economic exchange to a new conceptual medium of money, in which prices and values were expressed. Money, the new medium of economic exchange – as currency and principal measure of wealth – became a schematic psychosocial fundraising paradigm that transformed into a new custom in all of Tivland.

Essentially, *kasev Tiv* (Tiv women) in a bid to acquire the Western basin of the British, introduced into the social tradition of Tiv people a special fundraising autonomous pattern called *Gbanyi u mirin*, a concept that originated from Dio Nenda in Mbagbeer hamlet of Ayati vicinity in Ukum around September 17th in 1922 and immediately spread over the Tiv world.

The antediluvian Tiv nation was full of great men of war and wealth. Nevertheless, many persons of good wealth

unconsciously circumscribed themselves within miniature industrial faculties. They have knowledge of hundreds of anticipated ways of economic breeding, which they did not put into practical use in their search for prestige and wealth. Indeed, many were conscious of a poverty of methods of wealth creation, which engendered in them a sense of timidity and self-depreciation. Significantly, the women folk adopted the *Gbanyi ú mirin* method used for solicitation of finance as a way of wealth creation for poverty eradication and appealing ambience of luxury.

The Gbanyi (Gbangi) ú mirin (Gbanyi launching or fund raising) produced good results, since it contributed greatly in boosting the economy of the Tiv world by affecting the general market, traditional breweries, pottery industries and commercial farmers among other aspects of Tiv nation's economy.

Gbanyi ú mirin event was usually organized by a woman who needed to own a Western Gbanyi (English basin), to show her prestige among her *iyuhe* (matrimonial contemporaries). The host used to give all her invited guest *ikyughur ce* (a prior notification) a month to the occasion and the invitation came a week to the event. The invited guests included friends of the husband of the hosting woman (*ahuraïor á nom*), boyfriends (*ior-mbakeren – in the case of a widow*), *asagbaïor* (rich men), daughters of the family who were married in other places (*onkasev mba ken unoo*) and the general public.

The event characterized by assorted *iniôngur awange*, *ahô pue* or *hyôrave* (traditional beer), music and dance was arrayed in alluring ecstasy with the verisimilitude of a kingly chieftom party well planned and commissioned to the liking of the entire populace of the Tiv nation in which it was organized.

In the occasion, *ibyer atsaka* and pounded yam were also prepared. Pounded yam is a traditional major meal and most favorite among the Tiv tribe of Benue in Nigeria. Significantly, it

is the official meal prepared with *Nyamkyegh* (chicken meat) or *Nyamtoho* (bush meat). It is gradually becoming or has become a traditional or official meal for all Nigerians these days, (Agber, 2011).

In the customary opening prelude, it was an obligation for the chairman of the occasion to sermonized guests on their code of conduct in the event, define their boundaries of operation and orders guest artistes to start music and the *orshua* (master of ceremony) to welcome invited dignitaries.

Rising from the coziness of dignity, the chairman of the occasion aligns his attractive exordium in artificial suavity with artistic elegance and tries to fix it in artless candor to stupefy all the present aspiring genius of the occasion. His speech is not pauper-friendly as he describes poor guest as audacious mendicants suffering from desultory vacillation and both wallow in assembled arguments in ascending supremacy.

The donation is done in a melodramatic display of superiority complex driven array that deserved approbation. For instance, the chairman donates 4 kobo and gives instruction that musicians should stop disturbing people with their music, while vice chairman donates 6 kobo to counter the chairman's order for a tranquil ambience. In another instance, a man donates 3 kobo and asks the traditional security agents to carry his rival's seat to the backyard and the rival in a bid to save himself from squalor communes with his friends who escorted him to the occasion to solicit for money from them, after which he donates 5 kobo. The 5 kobo is riven that 3 kobo is for the bringing back of the seat to the arena, 1 kobo is ordering for music and the last one kobo for asking every guest to keep quiet.

The exhorted fundraising *Gbanyi ú mirin* event gracefully continues in a dramatic donation humor that every invited dignitary runs out of cash and zooms out of the occasion, except the most flamboyant genius that makes the highest donation and

is declared the winner, a pronouncement highly whirling in awesome effulgence of splendid space of honor.

Host now comes out with her cado (chado) or tuluma (Tiv wrapper) and gives to the winner of the dramatic competitive donation, which gives the man legal permit to be hosted over the night. Musicians entertain him a little while and leave for their various destinations. The host collects the money realized from the launching and purchases the Western basin called Gbanyi.

In the Gbanyi fundraising event, different types of music and dance groups used to come and perform and essentially, it was out of these groups or bands that some veterans merged to form the Gbanyi music and dance sometime around 1913.

Yamuel Yashi, the biggest name in Swange history as a composer, singer, dancer and musician (drummer), introduced into the Gbanyi music unique dancing steps and generally brought dynamic modifications in the music and dance.

Essentially, it was from the diverse music and dances that were performed at the Gbanyi ú mirin occasion that evolved into Gbanyi Music pioneered by Yamuel Yashi in 1946.

The Tiv people used to vine ishor or amar and tirigh or chagh (cagh) amar and ishor until the new dancing steps introduced into Gbanyi music and dance by Yamuel Yashi that the term sange ishor came into the Tiv music vocabulary.

Ostensibly, the sangen á Sange ishor concept, been new in the Tiv traditional music vocabulary became difficult for the pronunciation especially by non-Tiv speakers. This gave rise to the pronouncing of sange as Swange about 1948 in Gboko and of course, that is the origin of the term Swange. Incidentally, some people argue that there is no word in Tiv language like Swange but of course, this term whether the wrong spelling form of Sange has enjoyed the fortune of been found among the established terminologies like Sw-e-n-de, Swan-de, Kw-Ange,

Tw-ande and then you can have Swange, and the like, hence that is part of how languages develop.

Significantly, in spite of the fact that Christian religion has made people to be biased concerning issues of Tiv traditional music and dance especially Swange music, the music has remained the most cherished music and dance not only to a Tiv man but also to other tribes of the world in general and importantly, Swange music is admired by both sinners and the greatest men of God in Nigeria today.

This is in agreement with Gbilekaa (1993) who rightly observed that the patronage Swange receives from both the public and private organizations shows that it is not an immoral or erotic dance. He further notes that Swange music is used in correcting aberrant social behavior.

It is important to note that even world renowned preachers, men of God like Pastor E.A. Adeboye who is the general overseer of The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) are gradually identifying with Swange music. The man of God visited Benue State on a special program tagged Divine Visitation held at Aper Aku Stadium on May 7th, 2013 and was heavily entertained with Swange music in Makurdi. He admired the music and profoundly prayed for the Benue Council for Arts and Culture Award-winning Swange troupe in Makurdi.



The Swange music arrayed in music cadence with the alluring shamanism pulled out the Flamboyant Mayor of Tel Aviv, Ron Huldai in Israel to dance publicly for the first time in history. The Tel Aviv Mayor participated in the Swange

music dance in the public in Jaffo in August 2009 during the Nigerian Festival of Arts and Culture celebration of 100 years festivities of the city of Tel Aviv-Jaffo in Israel that was held August 22-30 in 2009.



Types of Swange Music

Apparently, Swange music has survived for more than a century now. Its stay within the 116 years from 1897 to 2013 has taken different forms under different artistes. Notably, from *Ange* by Utuku Agire to Mtswen Gbande by Tyô Ulaga Gbenga and subsequently to Gbanyi or Swange by Yamuel Yashi Agbatar, Swange music has surfaced in different forms or types.

Basically, Swange music and dance could be grouped into six forms.

- Tyôlyu
- Ayev (Ayer)
- Agbuu
- Apolo Pue Teratar
- Kpingi and
- Ngigh-Ngigh

Other newer forms of modern Swange music and dance in Tivland include:

Gbanyi (Gbangi)	– Yamuel Yashi
Modernized Swange	– Yamuel Yashi, Jerry Ugba and Hamma Ula
Manyi	– Sele Uge (Celestine Uge)

Tua	– Ability Apuu Abeekaa
Anzaaior	– Agema Amenger
Divishen Ukum	– Kaachivin Ayati
Kyureke	– Iorshe Hir
Baka	– Iorav Gber Kyôbo
Iyolgbeer	– Iorlumun Ankyá
Mzangem	– Phillip Nyitse and Tersoo Kuje
Gbange	– Abua Tortya and Joseph Asongu Tor and
Tabuluma	– Gimán Tsar, Atakye Abugh

Swange Musicians

It is noteworthy that Swange music has innumerable musicians however, for the sake of time and space; only few of them that pioneered and popularized the dance are discussed here.

Tyô Ulaga

The factors that contributed to the evolution of what is known today as *Swange Music* were many in their diverse forms ranging from Ange to Gbanyi. Moreover, Mtswen Gbande by Tyô Ulaga cannot be left out. Ulaga started his One-Man Band in March 13th of 1934 and named it *Mtswen Gbande* (Lone Drummer).

Tyô Ulaga chose to perform at market places like Tsar-Mbaduku, Agbo-Mbakaange, Tyemimongu-Mbayongu, Ihugh-Mbera, Aondoana-Iharev, Biam-Ukum, Gboko, Makurdi-Iharev, Adikpo-Kwande, Anter and Anune-Mbakor among others. Ulaga also performed significantly at Gbanyi ú mirin fundraising events in Tivland.

In the *Mtswen Gbande* Music, the performer was called *Ormtswen-gbande* (a lone drummer), who used to beat the drum and sing songs for the listening pleasure and entertainment of

the available audience especially those in traditional bars known as iyough-hyôrave or iyough msôr.

Making of the music or beating of the drum, singing and dancing were all done by one man (Tyô Ulaga) however; at the apogee of the performance, the audience usually joined in singing and dancing allowing the drummer to concentrate on drumming. It was amazing that the big drum although single, could produce more than seven (7) musical notes.

Because of the amazing tones that the drum could produce, it became possible to make sweet music that enhanced the flexibility of singing and dancing to the liking of whoever was present; and better appreciation of the culture or tradition from whence the music originated as a cultural music and dance.

Due to changing times and seasons, the originator of the *Mtswen Gbande* music decided to adjust the form of his music by adding more musical instruments to make sweeter beats of music. He introduced idiophones like gong (*kwen*) and improved on the membranophone he already was using by adding *ichôrough* (smaller drum), which raised the music from its crawling local starting to its standing effulgence and sweetness in 1941.

The music icon Tyô Ulaga provoked many music talents in Tiv Nation in the 1940s that brought to limelight men like Kuje Yum, Guusu Aie also known as Kpee Aie from Kunav – Mbayongu, Gyura Duku Agema, a sojourner from Sherev – Ukum and Hyomna Atsuku from Ukum. All were only singers or composers who due to nonsupport or determination could not stay in the Tiv Traditional Music Industry up to five years, apart from Kuje Yum or Tarker Golozo who came in the late 40s.

Tyô Ulaga was born in June 22, 1914. Although, nothing about his early life is known until he started his music career at the age of 20 and nothing is known about his last days and death, his popularity lasted for about a decade.

By the way, Tyô Ulaga Gbenga could not make solemn success since his music was characterized by perennial autonomy even with incessant modifications, adjustments and adornments, the last known which was changing of *Mtswen Gbande* to *Baka* in 1945 in the eve of the rising of another icon in the Tiv Traditional Music Industry, the legendary Yamuel Yashi Agbatar Gyur.

Yamuel Yashi Agbatar Gyur



The greatest advantage the *tar* Tiv (Tiv World) enjoyed during the pre-colonial era was the growing of a minuscule people into an indivisible invincible nation that integrated into morally decent world (*tar*) advancing progressively in philosophy, science, technology, wealth, power and authority, and social stability.

Essentially, it was at this historic time that a small people splitting – not dividing, harmoniously in the essence of development and civilization – aligned into stronger villages or settlements. Men of wit and valor were born into the family (the Tiv world) such men and women of power and might like Jato Aka, Ulam Agashua, Tor-Donga, Atswen Daber, Gbayange Atô, Gbishe Akô, Anwade (*wan* Wade), Ngôkugh Ura, Adamgbe Adasu and the rest.

The British Colonial administrators discovered that Tiv people were men of power and valor and selected a special military force of men like Makir Dzape, Agber Ligom Ayom, Kaor Chira (Cira), Lawrence Gyuse Doki, John Aemberga Samu among others to fight for them during the Second World War (WWII) in Burma, who came back in 1946. The most respected people in

Tiv world were noble men (*Asagbaïor*) out of whom the British Council chosed to serve in the British Army during WWII and Yamuel Yashi was one of the most noble men of the dignifying and bourgeois class in the Tiv nation of that day.

These high classes bourgeois were public benefactors and their fame was on everybody's tongue. Indeed, few of them were born great and majority struggled to become great. Their fame became widespread as a result of initiation of fantastic ceremonies and prestigious parties, which included *Ibyamegh*, *Nyinya*, *Ivyom* (*Ivom*), *Indyer í gberen*, *Imo í mirin* and *Amar á wan*.

Significantly, few examples of such people included Chaver Kper Mondu from Mbaterem – Ukum, Shima Awen from Kwande, Yamuel Yashi from Mbayion, Agbo Kpire Imbyor Akombu from Kunav, Amua Iwyaga from Gaav, Udugh Wankar Ugande from Ukum, Ulam Agashua from Mbaïase, Kôkô from Shangev-Tiev, Kaatyo Gbagema from Ukan, Tsua from Kunav, Kasar Agashua from Kunav, Agber Ligôm Ayom from Kunav – Mbayongu and Aôndoana Adaga from Ityôshin – Raav of Ihyarev among many others.

Kukuma Ugba Uye (in a verba discussion, February 11, 2013) said that “Yamuel Yashi, in a bid to prove his nobility in the tar Mbayion, bought Nyinya (horse) with the approval of his uncle Gyuse Agbatar and initiated a prestigious praise singing ceremony (*mir imo*) and organized a music concert competition (*wa amar*) or dance festival in March 18th of 1943”. Musicians, music bands and composers all over Tiv world came and the guest artiste Utuku Agire composed the anthem of the occasion. Below is the song:

Yamuel Yashi Agba (Agbatar) yam Nyinya
Nom Nyinya mase senen
Tyô í Gyuse Agba
Or á tôô nán a hia angahar.

Though, Atuu (1998) argued that Yamuel Yashi hung through life without a wife, it was a necessity for men of Yamuel's caliber to marry and this promulgation is affirmed by Akpede (2010) that before a man can *mir amar* i.e. declare dance festival involving a mammoth gathering, he must be married as one of the important conditions.

Yashi (as cited in Ligôm, 1978) admitted that his wife Shorna was the daughter of Aza from Tyuav in tar Kyurav-Ya. They got married in 1937 and separated in October 14th of 1951 without a child. Shorna, having separated from Yamuel Yashi went back to Ikyôgen but later settled in Bovkyo hamlet in Ayati town of tar Ukum.

Arising from the debris of a suppressed culture and music, came a brand of Tiv Traditional Music known as *Gbanyi* by Yamuel Yashi in 1946 after twelve years of the arrival of *Mtswen Gbande*.

Until 1952 spanning to 1954, Yamuel Yashi had a more organized *Gbanyi* Band, which was majorly made up of: Yamuel Yashi, Kitô, Soom Anipka, Orshio Ada Kever, Neneke Zenke Mkôvor Jagera, Msenge Mela, Aii Ikpa and others.

Critically discussing Yamuel Yashi, Agber (2013) observed that though born in a thatched house without a conventional door, in the thick forest populated by beasts and wild creatures, Yamuel was brought up in the customs and traditions of a Tiv man that he was physically as strong as a lion and was so disciplined to understand the meaning of life in his own angle of existence. The disadvantage of unorthodoxy of living in a jungle-like village had pity on him to allow him a privilege of a solemn tranquility that drove his dear soul to the serenity of thoughtfulness, which gave him the ability of intellectual concentration.

The force of commonsense informed him to find good reason enough why he must live and that, he did for over a

decade, and although poverty refused to compromise with him and Yamuel himself was not well convinced; he found no better reason or purpose for which to live than music.

This gave rise to his multiple composition of traditional songs and that explains why he, more than any other singer or musician in Tiv Nation composed more songs till the time of his death.

Nzuur (Nzuul) Genyi, Tarker Golozo, Amadu Adugba, Matar Kyaave, Guusu Aie, Tondur Kumbur, Obadiah Orkor, Oliver Aye, Kpuunakpu Jev, Pevikyaa Zegi, Wuhe Kyambe Agbee, Anche Igbaaze, Kuje Yum, Youghur Ute Nyagema, Gbue, Gari Kwaghbo, Agugu Igbakumbur, Ajo Ugor, Bagidi, Aôndo Kume Dura, Atayo Koko, Aginde Agena Lekke, Aguv Butu, David Agwa, Udoo Mbalagh, Gyura Duku Agema, Faga Ajinge, Solomon Abua Doki, Godwin Adigô, Iortyange Akya and Mwuaga Ahua who mentored Pevikyaa and more, all sang sweetly and intellectually but Yashi has composed more than any of them.

Jenkwe (1998) struts this by noting that of all the contemporary oral poets in Tivland, there is perhaps none as talented and versatile in verbal skill, imagination, and sensitivity, as Yamuel Yashi. He further observes that though there are several outstanding oral poets on the Tiv literary landscape, none to his mind approaches the achievement of Yashi either in creative skill or in the preoccupation with fundamental problems of existence.

Waking up from the sleep of sense, same which hosted his dream about becoming a music superstar, in the night of his making, he left his parents and home to seek for fame and fortune in the city. Wallowing in the fear of the goblin that troubled his ancestors – the imp poverty – he reassured himself with the hope of his music talent to end the battle against his greatest enemy in gradual stages to fulfill what he discovered as his destiny, traditional music.

From his pre-youth to adolescence, life wore a very harsh face with Yamuel although the stars of his greatness were always beaming down to his heart the light of hope and passing over the skies of peace, he never really understood their position and state of direction.

Having wrestled with life throughout his pre-youth stage, he was able to cut the head of the cobra of animosity that bit his father's heel and zoomed off to the city however, he still met with the scorpion of the same background that he removed its teeth but drowsy thoughts misled him not to understand that scorpions do not need teeth or mouth to do harm but the sting, which was one of his capital mistakes.

Apart from Ulianyi Kyurche (Kyuce) who was the most popular mad man in Tiv Nation that composed songs – lived between 1890s and 1950s, Mr Chibee Tyough, Hilfan Iorlaha, Shima Awen and Hule Abenga who had a fashion competition with Nyer Biam Allah and won, there was no handsome man in the century more than Yamuel Yashi.

Yamuel was a security officer at Adekaa market in Gboko but the plea for his music could not allow him devotion to the security job. He used to gather children and train them on how to dance and sing.

Yamuel Yashi was born December 12th of 1916, the year Jebba Bridge was commissioned, and at the age of 16 he left his family to Gboko city in 1932, which was the year Gboko was made headquarters of the Native Authority of the Tiv Division and the same year Makurdi railway bridge was commissioned; he was however visiting home duly.

The legendary Yamuel entered his hunting expedition for fame and fortune with the best bullets but had to borrow a gun from men of no focus, and although he managed to buy bows with the little he had ever acquired in life, he still needed to

borrow arrows from men who never trusted him and that was the problem he struggled to fix throughout his lifetime.

Atuu (1998) though, tried to rain insults on the personality of Yamuel Yashi, still unwillingly admitted with solemn diligence that Yashi became a legend in his life time.

Encumbered with unmollifying conditions, Yamuel Yashi still grew up without moral obliquity and destiny pushed him with obligatory force to music, which was emershed in musical diapason that brought to exposure his oracular composition of songs into oratorical display.

Jenkwe (2002) noted that Yashi started his career as a singer and composer at a youthful age. Atuu (1998) affirms that he had a maniacal devotion to songs and attached himself to his music with the kind of zeal that equals up to some form of religion. To the God of music, he was an atheist saint. In the political time he sang for the UMBC party. He was a brave man. Agber (2013) laments that though, Yamuel had the means; he sought for major minds to set it on wheels to bring joy to the Tiv Nation and peace to his hardworking soul. He however approbated by observing that obviously, Tiv Traditional music superstars made history in the industry, but Yamuel came to change the face of history in the same Tiv music industry.

The secret scars of Yamuel's wounds made him who he was and drew marks of progress on the sand of *Swange* music. However, had the gods or spirits of the ancestors so gifted Yamuel at birth, he would definitely have rather, played the generous and smiling king in a most spectacular chieftdom with a splendid effulgence of dignity and power like Solomon, than have acted his miry path of a legendary Swange musician, (Agber, 2013).

The shrubs of Swange are traced as far back as 1934 when office of the Tor Tiv was initiated. However, the popularization of Swange music is genuely attributed to Yamuel

Yashi Agbatar Gyur who started his *Gbanyi* Band in 1946 when the first Tor Tiv (Makir Dzakpe) was elected.

Agber (2013) wrote that how pleasant it is to have held the credo that in human life, when your ways are not found pleasing before your kinsfolk, even if you are dancing under the waters, they will complain that you are raising dust, and also that the cry of a chick does not stop the falcon from eating its meal. He therefore explained that Yamuel's stars in his later life became dark and compelled him to brood over the mystery of life's spectacle when he should have liked to draw some fun and fame from the show and to have contemplated its comedy rather than its tragedy.

The legend started his music career when he found his Gbanyi Music Band in 1946, his best Album was recorded in 1959 and launched October 1st in 1960 – the same date and year Nigeria got her independence. His second album was recorded February 19 in 1964 at Kaduna with the help of Mr. Iorlaha Faga who just came back from Germany and was the only Tivman in the Nigerian Military Industry. By 1962, Yamuel's team members Jerry Ugba and Hama Ula Lisa changed the name Gbanyi to Modernized Swange.

Jerry Ugba and Hama Ula Lisa had the best Swange dancing steps and served as tutors in the team or the new Swange band. Hama Ula Lisa was a driver and the most physically strong giant in Tiv Land during his time who was a close friend to Jerry Ugba.

Agber (2013) noted that Yamuel Yashi died in November, 1991 at Andôôr near Tyeku in Mbayion. He attended the burial of the wife of Adoon Zum to perform and haven left the burial ceremony ground; he was smashed by a trailer truck and died on the spot.

Soom Anikpa

Apparently, Soomiyol (popularly pronounced Soom) Anikpa Abyem parted ways with Yamuel Yashi in 1963 and formed his band, which was made up of Soom Anikpa, Tony Bur, Orshio Ada Kever, David Agwa who was popularly known as Korofo, Jerry Ugba, Hama Ula Lisa, the lad Mike Mbatyelevde and other members.

Soom, like Nzuur Genyi was crippled and although highly talented, could not make serious impact since he separated from his mentor Yashi Yamuel.

In 1965 Soom's Band went to Kano for performance and although the tour and performance was very successful, the chickenpox pandemic as an enemy of no mean brutality waged war against the team without a prior warning and since they had no security against such cohorts of malady, the sickness swept away the life of David Agwa.

Having come back to base, Mike Mbatyelevde who was mentored or trained by Korofo fully replaced him in Soom's Band. The team took about three weeks to mourn the death of their choice member who died in Kano after their visit to the Saduarna of Sokoto Sir Ahmadu Bello who demanded for a Swange Troup to entertain him in Kaduna.

That same 1965, Mr Akiga requested for the Troup to entertain him in Jos. Sergeant Kave and Jonathan conveyed the team and on their way to Jos they had a ghastly accident. The military truck that conveyed them capsized after Akwanga, on the Buku Bridge and fourteen people died including another important member of the team, Iorver Kyura.

After the death of Iorver Kyura, who was a supporting idiophonist, handling the gong, Gbakor Gbeke replaced him and sooner or later Orshio parted ways with Soom Anikpa.

Orshio Ada Kever



Orshio's Band of 1965, having separated from Soom was an exception. Been an experienced aerophonist with specialization in *Gida*, he combined with the best brains and talents selected from previous troupes or bands he had served

before and that made a glorious team like never before, apart from Yamuel Yashi's Band from which most of the Tiv traditional music experts of the 1960s to 1980s came.

Orshio's band was made of Orshio Adavker, Mike Mbatyelevde, Igbakor Gbeke, Akondur Ihwa, Sachia Yughur Abwa also known as Ornookeghakegh, Mengai Tordonga and Tyôvihi Chen also known as Jolly.

Though born and nurtured by different families in different geographical locations of the



Nation under varying degrees of social, biological and psychological or intellectual conditions, Orshio's story is in same line, hook and sinker with that of Yamuel Yashi who introduced him.

The legendary Orshio, like Yamuel Yashi, left his native Kpav Shitire and came to Gboko to look for fortune. Orshio met

with the flamboyant Swange musician, Yamuel Yashi in 1956 in Katsina Ala at one burial ceremony and was pleased with Yamuel's performance. He asked whether Yamuel will allow him to coerce his Gida into the Swange music beats to see if it will blend and of course, the result was beyond expectation.

Consequently, Yamuel requested Orshio to come and join him in his Swange band to play together and at the burial of Nyianshima Hundu of Mbadim in *tar* Ipav in 1957, Orshio came and joined Yamuel in Gboko, which was then the native authority headquarters that was full of free and vast opportunities for everybody and that explains why everybody's attention was in Gboko city.

Having realized that his ultimate desire to become rich in life would be thwarted by his kinsfolk and delayed by his parents, the boy Orshio decided to leave his people, especially when all eyes – except that of his mother – started looking at him as a wayward or prodigal son.

He left his native Shitire out of indignation and vowed, in a way of preference to waste away than waste around with the hope of certainty to live with freedom and happiness among strangers as against the possible living under captivity and squalor among his family members.

The music icon struggled so much in life and subsequently out of pity, nature pushed him into the ways of the great but already he was tired, unable to move to greatness he desired and although fortune gave him a truck to drive to his desired destiny of riches, he never knew how to drive however; that was when he fell in love with music, which was another promising way out for him.

By 1958, Orshio familiarized himself with Tiv traditional musicians of that era like Akurega Ajav, Nzuul Genyi, Iorgyer

Igbya who was Yamuel Yashi's boy and so many others however; he discovered that he had more interest in aerophones.

Utee Jija, was the best aerophonist of his era and like Adema Gbyughur who specialized in kwabura or akya (pipe), he specialized in Gida (trumpet). The expert Utee was proud to mentor the tender Orshio, which of course, he did well. Essentially, Orshio was trained by Utee Jija and sincerely he became, let's say, better than his mentor probably because of very keen interest in what he thought would make him rich.

At first, Orshio, like his mentor Utee Jija, used to play in local liquor bars (iyoumsôr) – literally [house of beer] but sooner or later Yamuel Yashi called him to play together. Yamuel gave Orshio a kind of mentorship that Utee could not give him. He created a familiar and flourishing platform for Orshio and introduced him to the public.

Although, Orshio's desire to become rich in life was overtaken by events, he ended up been famous. Chief Ama Ikwe, Akesa Agba, Chive Tyorough, Chief Ikyume Agena Lekke and Agee Ayati all were of the opinion that Orshio ended up been famous instead of been rich because he left his mentor Yamuel Yashi too quick and joined Soom Anikpa who was also an apprentice to Yashi. In any case, this was just their personal opinions.

In the moment of popularity, Orshio's fame increased with high velocity for three reasons:

- 1 He was introduced by a man of dexterity in the industry, quite noble and famous; Yamuel Yashi Agbatar.
- 2 His talent and skillfulness in Gida paved way for him to fame.
- 3 Orshio had supporters who were among the most famous men of Nigeria of that day. People like Major Adingi, Shuwa Mama, Iky, Useni, Abdullahi Shelleng, Atom

Kpera, T.Y. Danjuma and others (Agber & Ingyoroko, 2012).

Soom Anikpa, Orshio and others under Yamuel Yashi were chiefly supported by David Wuam Gambe Dajo, who allowed them to be practicing and performing in his house and further, Republican Hotel also owned by Wuam. However, after they parted from Yashi, Swange had to shift base from Gboko to Makurdi.

Subsequently, in 1967 Alhaji Umaru Gwalgwada encamped Orshio's band in his hotel in Makurdi, which was then Jubilee Hotel that is no more in existence. The band of course, extended its performance to other venues like Makurdi Club as well. Temporarily, ladies like Miss Kampala (Cecilia Akaaimo), Mbaningir Zôhò and Tabitha Gbor participated in the dancing troupe led by Orshio.

Still flourishing, the then Governor of Benue Plateau in 1969 requested the Tor Tiv HRH Gondu Aluor to send the Swange musicians to him to represent the Federal Government in Algeria and Canada. In that regards, Ingyôugh from Shangev Tiev, Takeru from Ipay, Hon. Tarker Golozo and his Bubuyaya International and Orshio with his Apollo 16 Swange Band were selected.

More so, Aliyu Akwe Doma conveyed the troupes or bands and handed them to the Governor for screening preparatory for taking or moving them to Lagos for their final departure to Algeria.

Other traditional artistes or bands like Dan Maraya, Jarawa and Alhaji Maman Shatta also came. In Lagos, the final screening was done leading to the disqualification of Golozo's partner (*Oryeseimo*) in the then person of Mr Tsegba on the reason that when Golozo sings, he repeats the same thing and hence they are going for a competition, there would be no time and need for that backup.

Dan Maraya on the other hand was the most favorite musician of the Hausas then and was, for that reason selected to entertain Colonel Katsina in Enugu on the eve that the Traditional Music Bands were to leave for Algeria. Dan Maria who slept on the upper bunk of the bed with Mike Mbatyelevde, wept throughout the night since this would have been the first time and opportunity to take his music outside the borders of its country of origin, Nigeria.

Swange music, on the platform of Orshio Ada Kever's band went to Algeria to represent the Federal Government of Nigeria in a cultural dance competition. After one week in Algeria, the band was transported to Canada for another presentation for two days and then back to Algiers.

In Algiers and Canada, Golozo and Orshio's Swange Band were merged and functioned as one entity in their performance. The arrangement was done by Tor Tiv right from home, that Golozo would raise a song and be backed up by Swange music.

Obviously, 1969 was the year that Golozo's songs started to be coerced into Swange and Golozo also started singing or composing many of his songs to the tone of Swange music.

For instance, the following short canticle was composed by Number One Tarker Golozo and it is an exponent of Swange music:

Onkasev mba kumbur mo

Er Morgbor Mbanyam

De mliam vaan

We u kuma inja la ga

Ei, ei, Morgbor Mbanyam

De mliam vaan

Girls were consoling me
That Potbelly man of *Mbanyam*
Stop crying
You are not good for that

No, no, Potbelly man of *Mbanyam*
Stop crying

After this development, Swange musicians started using other people's songs and other praise singers also started tailoring some of their song patterns to the tune of Swange, most especially, artistes like Pevikyaa Zegi, Mwuaga Ahua, Agugu Igbakumbur and Ajo Ugor.

The Orshio's band in conjunction with Bubuyaya Internationals led by Tarker Golozo performed pretty well in both Algeria and Canada and came back to base in February 8th, 1969 and since then, Swange music became an Internationally accepted and nationally leading traditional or cultural music and dance whose origin is clearly from Tiv Nation.

Orshio's Apollo 16 Swange Music Band passed through so many development events, travels and performances in history and still was flourishing well till July 18th of 1972 when Abua Orukuna' joined the team.

Major Adingi in 1974 called the band to perform for the entertainment of all Tiv folks who were in Lagos. Abua who brought two girls in the band shortly after he joined Orshio was also very familiar with dancing and adding together with Ornookeghakegh (Ornookeeker) became a tool to taking the band to the next level of entertainment.

1974 was the year the pageant of Miss Swange Contest was instituted in Lagos, and this was as a result of the explicit performance of the two young ladies brought in Orshio's band by Abua in the Lagos contest.

Stakeholders decided that the best dancer will be awarded the First Miss Swange in history and will be given an air ticket to London on a visit to Mrs Joseph Sarwuan Tarka however; the lady who performed best was disqualified due to her failure to cooperate with elders and stakeholders.

Adingi was pleased and attracted to the dancing skills of Abua and as a result, decided to take Swange music to the next level by buying western musical instruments for the band. However, instead of donating the percussions and guitars to the band leader Orshio, he gave them to Abua.

The instruments were conveyed on the same bus that transported the entire band back to base and on arrival; Abua decided to part ways with Orshio and started his own band.

One of the important things that happened to the Orshio Apollo 16 band was the coming in of Richard Tsevende, a choreographer who became the band manager in 1972. Richard as the Band Manager choreographed new Swange dance steps and changed the old ones. He put life into the band and the dance and subsequently mentored many other Swange musicians with his experience and dexterity.

In essence, Orshio's contribution to Swange music and dance cannot be overemphasized. His achievements and feats are too numerous to mention however, it is good to note that he was recognized as the world's best trumpeter. Teghtegh (2005) reiterated this by adding that apart from Orshio's dexterity at his performance, he also contributed to pushing Benue State on the world cultural music and dance. He further explained that the London experience saw Ada Kever being adjudged the best trumpeter in the world, reconfirming his place in the Guinness book of record as the best trumpeter in the world.

Moreover, Boniface Orshio Ada Kever Kweri Yeor, a teacher of Tiv traditional music has contributed to the world music talents. He trained people like Atsua Anula Jagba and many other trumpeters or Gidanist in India, Egypt and United Kingdom. His students include the world renowned saxophonist, Dr. Yusuf Ratiff from United States of America, whom he lectured in London on how to play Gida in 1983. Orshio gave all his lectures in Tiv Language and his interpreters included the great

choreographer Richard Tsevende and Jonathan Mtom Ikyume Agena Leke.

Boniface Orshio Ada Kever died October 13th in 2003 and was buried December 4th of the same year.

Abua



Abua

Solomon Doki, the king of Kpingi exponent of Swange music was born April 14th 1946 to the family of Abua Tortya from Mbakunde, Mbakaange in Vandeikya Division. His mother Apeaer Kodar from Mbera of the same Vandeikya Division was a farmer.

His father was a dancer best known for his brand of Tiv Traditional music called *Gbange*. *Gbange* (xylophone) was a band and a brand of music that reigned between 1817s and 1950s. The musical instruments used were chiefly *gbange* and *Akya* (pipe). Later in the late 1940s, he left his *Gbange* music and ventured into business, dealing in fish, palm oil and *Chado* (traditional cloth). *Gbange* was best performed on the farm during guarding of Amine (*Kura ú Amine*).

Solomon Doki, popularly called by his father's name Abua, was a business young man like his father, also dealing in sells of clothes. Although, the legendary Abua attended only primary two between 1950 and 1952, he was highly intelligent and well talented in music.

He traveled to so many cities and countries, few of which include: Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon.



At last, Abua settled in Kano city and subsequently started coming in contact with Swange music under Orshio.

Abua joined Orshio Ada Kever's Swange Band in 1972 and having already got some dancing skills from his father, he was

able to learn fast. Sooner or later he brought in two girls in Orshio's band.

Orshio's band had only one official dancer who was Shachia Yughur (Ornôrkehgakegh) and for the first time girls were coming in through Abua to add attraction and more force to the team. The first Kpingi gir was Mbapuun Kpojime. Abua who brought in Gbagir Asawa and Juliana Jam in 1973 trained them extensively on *Kirzongu* dancing.

In 1974, Major Adingi then a Military Captain, bought Western Musical Instruments for Abua and he separated from Orshio to form his band. His 1974 band was made of Solomon Doki Abua Tortya, Samuel Amase, Samuel Garba, Attack Kyuve, Tony Azembe, Ature Hom, Anchuku Amishi, William Jirbo, Asor Yese and female dancers Gbagir Asawa and Juliana Jam.

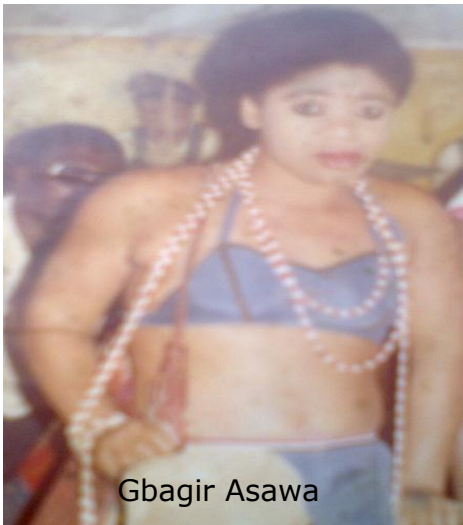
Master of Swange music, Abua, started his music as Kirzongu in 1974 but later in February 14th in 1975 changed it to Kpingi. He took over traditional music industry and reigned for a decade between 1974 and 1984. His Kpingi music, an exponent of Swange was consistent within the decade because he had a collection of chief brains and skills in Swange music.

Samuel Amase, a retired Nigerian Army Officer was the reigning skilled trumpeter trained by Orshio and Gbagir Asawa was a well-built lady, whose shaking of buttocks in a well vibrated manner as though it were an automatic vibe at each step of her movement fanned the attraction of fans to the flourishing of Abua Young Stars Kpingi Band.

Kpingi is a form of dance characterized essentially by fancifully shaking of buttocks in a naturally organized manner. Abua's contact with founders or originators of Makossa music spurred his interest in this form of traditional music. Cameroon Makossa is Nigerian Kpingi of Tiv origin in Benue State.

Abua met with founders of Cameroon Makossa Les Tete and Emmanuel Manu Dibango in the late 1960s and became the founder of Kpingi dance of the Tiv tribe of Nigeria in 1974, though he later adopted the dancing steps of James Brown. Essentially, Tete and Dibango were influenced by Yamuel Yashi's Swange that they modified to suit their culture, a modification Abua fell in love with and advanced it at its peak in 1975.

The importance of the master of Kpingi Dance, King One



Gbagir Asawa

Abua, Mr Solomon Doki Abua Tortya in history especially that of Tiv Cultural Dance or Tiv Traditional Music Industry and Swange Music is that he was the first person who introduced western musical instruments in Tiv Cultural music in 1974 and in all cultural music in Northern Nigeria.

Erroneously, Yuwa (2001) records that

Mbatyelevde is credited with having introduced the western musical instruments to Swange, the popular Tiv Cultural dance. Mike Mbatyelevde, 47, has risen, fallen and is on the rise again. Mbatyelevde became very popular in the early 70s because he was the first person to render Swange on western guitar, conga, percussion and drums.

Obviously, we solemnly dispute Yuwa's view accrediting Mbatyelevde with the first person to render Swange on western musical instruments for three reasons:

- 1 Abua started his Kpingi band known as Abua Young Stars in 1974 when Mike Mbatyelevde was still under Orshio Ada Kever. More so, Abua started his Kpingi with Tiv drums but his first album was rendered on western musical instruments.
- 2 Mbatyelevde was not popular in early 1970s as viewed by Yuwa, it was late 1970s, of course, Orshio gave him his freedom in 1977 and he recorded his first album in 1978.
- 3 As of 2001 that Yuwa claimed Mike was 47 years, he was actually 50 years.

Due to the popularity and dexterity of Abua in Kpingi Swange music, he was awarded with the title of **King One Abua** by students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in 1975.

While Fela Kuty, Abua's close friend was shaking the western Nigeria with his music, Abua raided Northern Nigeria with his Kpingi and King One Abua had more fans than any other Swange musician – like Tyô Ulaga Gbenga, Yamuel Yashi Agbatar Gyur, Soom Anikpa, Orshio Ada Kever, Samuel Amase, Ature Hom, Mike Mbatyelevde JP, Iorbee Tyôbee, Tony Azembe, Zule Zuu and Anongo Data JP.

King One Abua joined Orshio in 1972, separated from him in 1974 and launched his first Album in 1975, which put to silence all other Swange musicians of that era.

The legend had innumerable fans, strong supporters, dignitaries and well-wishers like then Captain Adingi, Senator Joseph Sarwuan Tarka, HRH Gondo Aluor, Wantaregh (Dr.) Paul Iorpuu Unongo, David Wuam Gambe Dajo and others.

In that way, Chief Akume Atongo in 1979 donated a car to Abua and his band, which was the first car ever owned in his life and by this the band was elevated to the next level of progress and development.

In the history of Swange music, King One Abua was the first person to own houses and hotels in Zaki-Biam, Vandeikya and Gboko cities, and also owned a car.

More so, Abua's concerts were laudier than any other that ever existed in the history of Swange and Tiv contemporary country music including Kohor Abinga, Oralu Ikpa, Utee Jija, Kuje Yom, Deanongu, Golozo, Agugu and the host of others. Abua made money out of his Kpingi that he became the richest Tiv musician of his time.

Abua's skills and music strategy placed him on the pinnacle of fame in Tiv music. The legend essentially became a public benefactor and of course, his close contact with women and men, due to his profession was silently clearing his way into polygamy, which he was unaware of it until he fell in love with Rhoda and married her.

Could this confession come from reason, that Abua's marriage to Rhoda was nature's strategy to undo this legend or it was plan of the gods to create a way for this superstar to release a hit track that will bring him more money?

However, the delivery of Rhoda's daughter Iember changed the hopes and prospects for peace in the family of this great Kpingi musician by giving rise to a court case that was capital intensive.

Before Rhoda's marriage to Abua, she married to Tofi's family but separated for about ten years according to her new

husband and after the birth of their daughter Iember, Tofi sued Abua to claim the daughter.

Although, Abua spent huge sums of money to make sure that he won the case, Denen Tofi then was the richest man in Gboko city who made the case hopeless to Abua.

Having spent huge sums of money for the court case, Abua's wealth was in serious dwindling state that was fairly impossible to recover. However, this did not put any daunting spec in the eye of Abua's Kpingi Dance and courageously, he released his hit Album *Ônôn – Gba Vaan Wan Na Ve*, in 1983.

In Abua's Album release of 1983 *Ônôn Gba Vaan Wan Na Ve*, William Jirbo played the acoustic guitar, Anchuku Amishi handled the drum set, Asor Yese served as the vocalist mounting the microphone while Gbagir Asawa and Juliana Jam were the leading dancers.

King One Abua, a typical African had six wives and many children. His first wife was Mbazan Avande Choon from Ukan who had three children, Msurshima, Bem and Mngusuur.

Abua's second wife Rhoda Mbateren Torkpa popularly known as Mama Iember Rhoda was from Shangev-Tiev who also had three children, Iember, Tavershima and Mimidoo. His third wife from Mbaakon, was the daughter of Chief Mbaiorga Usaka Aguji but she had no issue with Abua. His fourth wife Mbanengen Labe Kajo from Nanev also had no issue.

His fifth wife, Mbanengen Kyuve Hwakar also had three children, Mwuese, Teryange and Terzungwe. In addition, his sixth wife was from Republic of Cameroon, she was the daughter of one Monsieur Stephen and had only one daughter, Dooshima.

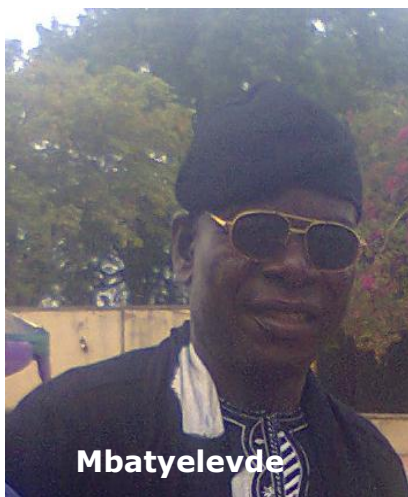
Crawling from the rubbles of a shattered wealth, trying to rise or recover from the bite of a cruel snake, Abua was bitten a second time by another poisonous snake of a court case when he

hired a bus from Mr. Bua for his nationwide music tour and the vehicle had a serious accident.

Although, the Kpingi master could not maintain his fortune due to a chain of mishaps, he struggled vigorously to maintain his fame in the Tiv traditional music industry by launching a masterful piece of Video Album, *Gboko To Vandeikya* in 1996.

It looked as though fortune was on the side of Abua again when the Government of Benue State of Nigeria under Governor Gabriel Suswam – with the coordination of Dr Cletus Akwaya – bought a new set of western musical instruments for Abua, but poverty could not be so kind to him to allow him perform beautifully again.

Mike Mbatyelevde



The problematic situations that started attacking Abua from late 1970s to this day deserve a curse but of course, on the other hand, they created a space for the rising of the most consistent Swange musician, Mike Mbatyelevde.

Zahan Matar Kyaave popularly known as Mike Mbatyelevde JP was born December 27th, 1951 to the family of Matar Kyaave from

Mbatyav. He was the last born in a family of three and was the only boy.

His father Matar Kyaave was not only a farmer but also a renowned singer. His grandmother named him Mbatyelevde and due to religious reasons, he later took the name Michael (Mike) based on his personal philosophy of life and Mike himself prefers been addressed as Mike Mbatyelevde Matar JP.



Zahan Matar, unlike Yamuel Yashi, Udoo Mbalagh and Orshio came to Gboko city not because, he was actually running away from witchcraft or jealousy but to advance his music talent although his name Mbatyelevde (*Let Mbatyelev Stop*) was aimed probably at stopping Mbatyelev witches and wizard from killing the boy, he was not really running away from witchcraft.

He left his native forest and came to a minuscule village town called Akpagher shortly after he started music, practicing with village folks in the eventides of the ancient jungle village in 1959.

By March 1959 that Zahan Matar was in Akpagher-Mbatyav, he came in contact with two local music champions, Azer Nor and Tarzaan Nungwa whom he watched keenly and continued practicing with them.

The lad Zahan Matar discovered his talent in music as a child and started music at a very tender age in life when he was just 8 in 1959 and that same year he moved to Akpagher in March and subsequently as his people approved, he moved to Gboko in November with his uncle Nzuul (Zughur) Genyi, a cripple who was one of the best traditional musicians in Gboko of that day.

Growing up in Agedam town of Gboko, Mike started his primary one in 1960 and continued to practice and develop his music skills under Nzuul Genyi. He loved music more than schooling and as a result decided to be attending evening classes; hence his performing schedules in liquor bars even collided with his academic timetable.

Essentially, Mike became aware of the New Swange music legends like Yamuel Yashi, Soomiyol Anikpa Abiem and Orshio Ada Kever Kweri in 1962 and by 1963 he came in contact with these masters of Swange music.

Apparently, Mbatyelevde fell in love with a brand of music Yashi and Anikpa, which he either had not known or played in Akpagher-Mbatyav or Nzuul Genyi had not been quite familiar with.

Significantly, Mike joined Soomiyol's Band through David Agwa also known as Korofo who was a proficient drum backupper in the team in 1963. Staying with Korofo, Mike served him diligently and expectantly, washing his clothes and bringing meals from Korofo's girlfriends but most importantly, he carefully studied under him.

In the course of banding as an apprentice, under David Agwa in Soomiyol's band, Zahan Matar got an injury on his penis and was taken to a nearby clinic for treatment. Incidentally, that was even the year and time he was circumcised.

Michael Mbatyelevde Matar Kyaave's first public performance or participation in Soom's band was at the occasion of the visit of Miss Nigeria 1963 Alice Aleebe. The team came back from a tour in Kaduna and Korofo, Mbatyelevde's mentor as his usual custom traveled to his village to visit with his family.

Having considered the impossibility of Korofo's return to Gboko that day and play his role as the best backupper in the team, Mbatyelevde was called upon for a trial to cover or represent his boss Korofo.

During performance of the troupe, it was discovered that Mike was even better than his master Korofo as he skillfully played for the first time in the public after his discharge from the hospital.

Alice Aleebe, the 1963 Miss Nigeria was overexcited at the boy's dexterity in handling the backup drums and reciprocated that by giving Mike a token of £1 (one pound), which was one of his greatest encouragements in his music career.

Importantly, much of Mbatyelevde's history in Swange music is embedded in Boniface Orshio's history. Mike was the most patient, and longest serving apprentice with Orshio, having started under Soomiyol Anikpa Abiem.

Considering that Mbatyelevde was faithful and patient, Orshio decided to give him his autonomy by assisting him with some musical equipment like amplifier and microphones for Mike to start his band in December 28 of 1977.

The Mike Mbatyelevde Matar's band of 1977 was made of Mike Mbatyelevde, Atsua Anula, Tyôzenda Ayôngur, Jirgba Afer, Deade Azenda, Tyôapine Mbanyiman, Ahumbe Abe, Anchukwu (Ahen) Amishi, Neneke Zenke Mkôvur Jagera, Kpaka, Tsavde, Tyôzenda Akegh, Athanasius Guusu, Orumace (Orumache), Akondu Ihwa, Victoria Jato, Rose Timuun (now Rose Ateze), Tabitha Cia (Chia), Mary and Rebecca.

The legendary Mike Mbatyelevde Matar JP started his band in 1977 and named his brand of Swange music as *Ngigh-Ngigh* and launched his maiden album "*Or a Soou u Soo Nan*" in 1978, which was produced by Dobby in Enugu.

In 1982, the Performing Association of Nigeria honored Mike by awarding him Chief Commander of Music in Northern Nigeria, the same year they made the flamboyant Kpingi master Solomon Doki Abua Tortya Ubaagu Vice President of the

Association while Obe was the President. This explains why Mike is addressed as Chief Commander.

Although, Mike recorded so many feats and achievements in his Ngigh-Ngigh Swange music such as recording three different albums, been awarded The Chief Commander of music in Northern Nigeria, marriage and so on, his downfalls and calamities were also numerous.

Yuwa (2001) has it that, Mike lost his musical equipment in a ghastly motor accident on his way to a performing engagement in Minna. But his host kindly bought him a complete set of new ones and he was back in business. Married with children, music has only brought Mbatyelevde fame but not wealth.

Chief Commander Mike Mbatyelevde Matar JP has traveled and performed in different countries and cities of the world such as Algeria, Canada, Ethiopia, Tel Aviv, City of David in Israel and New Jerusalem among others. He is addressed with the suffix JP (Jerusalem Pilgrimage) because he has toured and performed in Israel.

Swange music would have followed its prescribed course into total obscurity in the mid-1970s when the flamboyant Abua introduced his extravagant Kpingi Dance, which made the modern normal Swange music seemed to be solemnly threatened with extinction however, with the rise of Michael Mbatyelevde and introduction of Ngigh-Ngigh Swange Dance that was conceived by Udoo Mbalagh, Swange music wore its live jacket and flourished unto this day.

The survival of Swange music unto this day principally hanged on the shoulders of some *Tiv Traditional Music Hall of Famers* like the Chief Commander Michael Mbatyelevde Matar JP, the legendary Atsua Anula, Ature Hom and the star Swange composer Chief Udoo Mbalagh.



Mike, who launched his most recent video album *Cha Cha Cha Swange Dance* on June 12th, 2012 at Gboko Club in Gboko Nigeria, was the longest and most patient serving apprentice in the history of Swange music. He studied Swange music under Soomiyol Ankpa Abiem for two years and eleven years under Boniface Orshio respectively. Of course, he is the oldest active Swange musician, not by age but by the number of years been in the Swange music industry.

He grew up in the Swange music career in stages, from a novice apprentice to an *Orcôrough* (backup-drummer) to a band Director or leader.

Mbatyelevde's expertise in backup-drums seriously influenced fans and composition of some Swange songs like the following:

Ka Michael a meem ye oo?

Ka Michael a meem

lor ve fem dang ye

Ka oragbande a meem

lor ve fem dang ye oo

Is it Michael who has tempted me?

It is Michael who has tempted me

That people have known my immorality

It is the drummer who has tempted me

That people have known my immorality

In 1987, Mike Mbatyelevde ran bankrupt and swayed into transportation business in Gboko and this was one of the most detestable moments in his lifetime.

Mike has four wives, among who are Lydia Iveren Igbakure, Dooshima Jingari Damkor and Wandoo Asom Nege from Mbawuar and has 18 children. He is currently working for Benue Council for Arts and Culture in Makurdi.

Ajas Anula



Atsua Anula Jagba, popularly known as Ajas was born June 8th, 1952 to the family of Jagba of Mbagba in Ushongu.

Growing up in Tsumba town in Ushongu, he studied or

schooled up to primary three and subsequently left Tsumba and came to Gboko city to look for fortune just like other Tiv traditional music heroes.

Anula who studied music under Nzuul Genyi also passed through apprenticeship under Boniface Orshio Ada Kever Kweri to artistically and technically study trumpets and trumpeting.

Having mentored by Orshio, Anula's dexterity in trumpeting started paving way for him to greatness by his numerous participations in different Swange musicians' albums like the Chief Commander Mike Mbatyelevde Matar JP, Ature Hom and Samuel Amase.

In traditional music, Anula belongs to the class that reigned in 1974 upwards such as King One Abua who is well known in Tiv nation and Uncle Ray who is well known in Idoma nation.

The legendary trumpeter started his Swange band in 1975 and named it "*Kon Mom Ngu Woho Ikyô Ga*" meaning a single tree does not make a forest.

His elegant band was made up of Atsua Anula, Ahen Nyamor, Andrew Kume, Ahumbe Abe, Tarture, Tyôapine Mbanyiman and Tsavde.

Anula had supporters and noble fans like Chief Tsenôngu Aba, Mbaiorga Usaka Aguji, Nyakam Akaa and Agbeen Kyôôn among others.

Although, Ajas has not recorded any album of his own singularly, he has immensely participated in so many Swange music albums, the most recent of which is Cha Cha Cha Swange Dance by Mike Mbatyelevde Matar JP in June 2012.

His participation and contributions to Swange music cannot be underestimated; of course, he is currently one of the best trumpeters in Nigeria at present.

Ajas has traveled far and wide and is currently serving as the senior trumpeter with Benue Council for Arts and Culture in Makurdi metropolis, Nigeria. Moreover, Anula runs a Swange Live Band at Owner's-Occupier in Makurdi as of the time of publication of this work.

He is married to Shimenenge Jabi from Ukan in Ushongu Local Government Area of Benue State and they have five children: Tersoo, Terna, Erdoo, Msendoo and Seember.

Ature Hom



Ature Hom born with his other brethren, Mbazendan, Ngayemen, Ahile and Hilekaan was the second born who was highly intelligent and music loving as a child.

His father Hom was an articulate trumpeter like Ajo Ugor and his mother Ngilu was a fervent farmer in Shitire, Katsina-Ala local government area.

Although, he had loving parents, the

environment was too harsh for pursuit of worth and wealth therefore, he sought in his heart wells of wealth and ways of wages for what he defined as the purpose of his life.

Christopher Ature Hom Agena was born March 15th 1964 and studied up to primary three in 1976. His battle with the elements of nature to become a man resulted in his leaving of the village where he was born with the hope of making a living out of leaving.

The legend was mentored by Akurega Ajav from Tor-Donga and subsequently joined Abua Tor Kpingi in 1975 at a very tender age when he was in primary two and participated in Abua's 1975 album.

Ature formed his band in 1979 and named it Swem Karagbe Swange Band, which was made up of Christopher Ature Hom Agena, Fabian Kumeka, Tony Azembe, Andrew Kume and Ananya Buter among others.

The vulgarity in songs and style of music of the Swem Karagbe Swange Band proved that the band as led by Ature also played Kpingi type of Swange unlike Mike Mbatyelevde's Ngigh-Ngigh, Orshio's Apollo 16 Swange, James Neeryum's Pioneers Swange and Fidel Shamel's Swange Reggae.

Although, all other Swange music brands had their form of songs and types ranging from educational to romantic songs and employed some form of vulgarity in them, Ature's Kpingi was an exception as can be seen in some of his following songs:

KARUA HOM A IKYUR

Ature Hom

1980

Daama daama
Daama daama
Daama daama
Daama daama

Daama, ahom a ikyur
Kaura hom a ikyur
Daama
Daama, ahom a ikyur

Karua hom a ikyur
Daama
Daama, ahom a ikyur
Daama

After all, after all
After all, after all
After all, after all
After all, after all (by the way)

After all, she has placed high premium on vagina
Prostitutes place high premium on vagina

After all
After all, she has places high premium on vagina

Prostitutes place high premium on vagina
After all
After all, she has places high premium on vagina
After all

JUA YAM I GBA ISHE GA

Ature Hom

1984

Jua yam
Igba ishe ga oo
I cii ka pam
Ato na la
Ka Naira

Shin mndeer
Na bua
Anihyura na la
Ka pam
Gbangeraa

My penis
Is inexpensive
The whole of it is one pound
Its ear (corona of glans)
Is one Naira

Its neck (frenulum)
Is cow
Its hole (external urethral opening)
Is one pound
Totally

KYUR NGI AGHER MO

Ature Hom

1984

Ankwagh u genegh
Erem ve oo
Kyur ngi agher í mo oo
Kyur ngi agher í mo oo

U kendem oo
Kyur ngi agher i mo oo
Ka mkpaa wan
Mkua ngô

Akper la kpa
Me kpaa wan
Me kua ngô, adue la kpa
Me kpaa wan me kua ngô

U kendem oo
Kyur ngi agher i mo oo
Anwan la kendem oo
Kyur ngi agher i mo oo

Another thing
Has happened to me
Vagina itches me
Vagina itches me

You have abandoned me
Vagina itches me
I fuck daughter
And mother
Tomorrow too
I will fuck daughter
And mother, following day too
I will fuck daughter and mother

You have abandoned me
Vagina itches me

The fellow has abandoned me
Vagina itches me

OR A SON KWASE KYUR YÔ NAN NA NAIRA PUE

Ature Hom Agena

1982

Ature son
Kwase ikyur
Wan wuha
Doo kwase kpôô

Or a son
Kwase kyur yô
Nan a na
Naira pue oo

Man kwase
Aza wegh shin kyur
A ovur
Naira pue la oo (Ature, nd).

Ature asked
A lady for vagina
The lady dressed cute
Perfectly beautiful

If a man asks
A lady for vagina
Let him offer
Ten Naira

Let the lady
Deep a hand in her vagina
And clean
That ten Naira

Christopher Ature Hom Agena also, like King One Abua, played Kpingi. His maiden album “*Kyuna Kwase*” hit the market January 27th of 1984. Some 21st century Swange music superstars

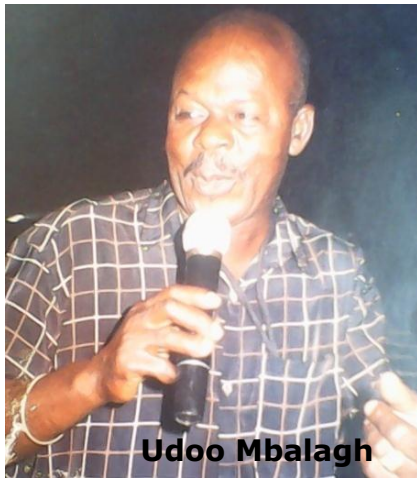
like Fidel Shamel, the master of Swange Reggae also played with Ature in the 1980s.

Christopher Ature has played an important role in Swange music industry through his composition of social, moral and romantic Swange songs.

The legendary Swange musician has five wives: Laadi Iorahii from Gaav-Konshisha, Monica Fave Uchichi from the same Gaav-Konshisha, Mlumun Adai also from Gaav-Konshisha, Aseer Agena from Gaav-Konshisha and Mbahenen from Shangev-Tiev Konshisha.

Tyôver, Tertsea, Terkimbi, Demenenge who is a Catholic Seminarian, Richard and Doowuese are Ature's children.

Udoo Mbalagh



Many people have virtually or greatly participated in Swange music either by playing or composing of its songs and Udoo Mbalagh is one of the greatest.

Essentially, the role of Udoo Mbalagh in Swange Music cannot be overemphasized. Apart from Yamuel Yashi, no Tiv Musician has composed more songs than Udoo Mbalagh in terms of

quality and quantity.

Basically, most of the Swange music songs used by Swange artistes are either composed by Yamuel Yashi or Udoo Mbalagh. James Udoo Neeryum Kaor Chira (Cira) popularly known and addressed as Udoo Mbalagh was born January 1st,

1942 in a family of nine to the family of Kaor Cira in Tombu Mbalagh.

His father Kaor Cira was an army officer who served in the British Army with people like Agber Ligôm Ayom, Makir Dzakpe, Aemberga Samu and Gyuse Doki among others. His mother Mbazan Jôv from Ipyav was a farmer and small scale business woman dealing in palm oil, beniseed, melon and pepper.

Significantly, if men were pretty comfortable and their primary mortal desires satisfied, the world's primitivity would not have come to history but waxing stronger through generations. The discovery of talents is spurred by either luxurious and problematic situations or turbulent times in the lives of the custodians of such talents.

The typhoon of tragedy that swept across the family of Neeryum Kaor took some of his siblings leaving two of them as the only survivors. *Ordoon or ú Mbalagh* (Udoo Mbalagh) was the eight born in a family of nine that seven were lost remaining him and the last born.

On the eve of the day Udoo Mbalagh will step in his maternal home with his father who initiated the idea; and traveled with his last sibling, the boy died at night where they put off and only Udoo was left in a family of nine.

Tyough Byough (Tyough Bo), Udoo's uncle considered the boy's loneliness and decided to initiate him into singing (what was known as *Jiagba í man*). As a result, Udoo started composing as a boy of 9. One of his lullabies:

Ka nyi iue?
Ka atuur ú
Ka nyi iue?
Ka atuur ú
Kunde via kpa?
Kunde via ga

Chagh via kpa?

Chagh via ga

The serenade was one that cleaved multitudes unto him like glue yet as a result created animosity against him from his host environment. Apparently, by 1957 James Neeryum Kaor Cira moved to Mkar under the directions of his mother's brother and settled there. In Mkar town, Udoo was able to find his way through school up to primary 3 and during his schooling days, his talent submersed the fanaticism for Western education and he opted out to hum into music fully as his life and career.

The flamboyant *Gbanyi* (Swange) music composer has composed multiple songs in his career and is still composing unto the time of this publication. During his early life in the Tiv traditional music, he offered mentorship to many legends in the industry such as Samuel Amase, King One Abua, Mike Mbatyelevde Matar and Ature Hom among others.

In decent tradition, his compositional wiz grew to a sane mollifying benefaction that having absconded out of the debacle that hunted him evaluated himself and seeing people's support attested that he was doing well in his career. This can be seen in his songs such as the one below:

Ku Saimon Ugba

Mo kwagh u a zem iyol

Mo (me) pase ior mba hen Tar wam

Ka or a kpe ve nan ya Tor

Mo i nam ú wam me ya zwa wam aa

Ôr nen a Ter Aôndo

A lumun a imo yam

Mbazan Jôv Mama oo

Mama kaa er or udoon or u Mbalagh

Awa imo a ter Maakyar

Misa Anjembe Akawe u

Dôbur jee a ungwa er

M dughun imo yô

*Misa Agbo oo
Lukor Agbo nam wundu man akôv*

*Ka lun mo er yange ior a gema ôrun
Er mfa imo i Gbanyi i gberen yô
Mpase Gbafan Cen (Chen) u Kuna
Or-Mbajôr Ger, alu u sember
Ican a yam kôv ôô*

*Aniwywa apirashe
Gbem lu a nongu mayange ga
Tyôture Zege Or-Mbaakune
Tar nam ikyur hen hyura yô
Mo kwagh hembam aa, (Amase, 1974; Udoo, 1974).*

Oh Simon Ugba
What troubles me
I will tell people from my country
It is only when one dies that he becomes king
As for me, I should be given so that I will eat with my mouth
*Tell God to
Accept my song
My mother Mbazan Jov
Mother said, handsome man of Mbalagh
Compose a song and mention Michael

Mr. Anjembe, secretary of
Double J to listen to
My composition of song
Mr. Agbo
Lukor Agbo has given me trousers and shoes

I feel one day people will praise me
That I know how to compose Gbanyi songs
Mpase Gbafa Chen of Kunav
Man from Mbajor Ger, if you delay
Poverty will eat me raw

A blind dog
Usually has no company
Tyôture Zege of Mbaakune*

*The world has offered me vagina through a hole, so
I am desperate*

Udoo Mbalagh started his Pioneer Swange Band in March 28, 1969 and later reorganized it January 27 in 1974. His album, *Iyon Gbande* subtitled *Anshiombu* by the Pioneers Swange Band led by Udoo was launched September 8 in 1974.

The flamboyant Swange musician, James Udoo Neeryum Kaor Cira has traveled far and wide as a result of his music to places like United States of America, Egypt, Israel and host of other countries of the world and he has toured the entire states of Nigeria.

James Udoo is married with children and is currently working for Benue Council for Arts and Culture in Makurdi, the Benue State capital.

CHAPTER THREE

Factors that contributed to Swange Music and Dance

Virtually, Swange music has enjoyed the patronage of many tribes and peoples of the world over the years since the time of Yamuel Yashi. The music and dance has suffered challenges and at the same time enjoyed prospects and prosperity from government and organizations through different individuals of good conscience and integrity.

Indeed, of the factors that contributed to Swange music and dance and its development, the individual factor under the platform of government or organizations is the principal factor. There are numerous individuals or personalities that have contributed immensely to the development of Swange music and dance both nationally and internationally, and few among whom we shall briefly discuss about include General Ibrahim Badamosu Babangida (IBB), Senator Dr. George Akume Governor Gabriel Torwua Suswam CON and Richard Tsevende.



General Ibrahim Badamosu Babangida has contributed greatly to Swange music and dance. The man IBB, the chairman of African Organization Union (AOU), contributed to the development of Swange music by introducing Swange to all heads of state of the African countries especially those who visited Nigeria. He sponsored the Swange troupe to perform in Seville, Spain in 1990 two times in one week.

The culture sector will remain grateful to this great achiever, a man of high military intelligence and democratic stratagem, General Ibrahim Babangida for his cultural policy of 1988 enabling decree signed into law by him. Apparently, till the time of this publication, no other cultural policy has been signed to replace the one signed by General Ibrahim Babangida.

The military chieftain and political don became so familiar with Swange and its dancing steps that he knew exactly what is was. As a result of this, in one performance in Nigeria, when he saw some Swange artistes whiling away time with a Kanuri dance he spotted it and scolded them; to an extent, he send Alhaji Sarkin Kudu who was then the Director for Abuja Council for Arts and Culture to inform the leader of the Benue Council for Arts and Culture Richard Tsevende not to adulterate Swange music and dance.

Another great aficionado and promoter of Swange music and dance is the former governor of Benue State, Senator Dr. George Akume Dajo who sponsored the Swange troupe to entertain the Great Muamar Gadhafi of Libya. He also sponsored Swange music and dance to be played in the city of Guanawato in Spain, New Delhi in India and continued to remain supportive to the Benue Council for Arts and Culture in terms of finance and moral support.



The political captain during his time as the executive governor of Benue State ensured that he introduced Swange music and dance to every visitor to the State at all times.



Importantly, another refined Swange promoter is His Excellency, Rt. Honorable Gabriel Torwua Suswam CON, the serving governor of Benue State. Governor Suswam, more than any other governor has sponsored the Award-Winning Benue Council for Arts and

Culture Swange Troupe frequently to foreign countries for different performances. He sponsored the Swange Troupe to perform in the Nigerian Magic presented by The Embassy of Nigeria in Israel at The Nigerian Festival of Arts and Culture celebration of "Tel Aviv, The 100 Years of Festivities of the City" in Tel Aviv-Jaffo August, 2009.

The governor also sponsored Swange music to be played in the Nigerian House in France on October 1st, 2010 at the Nigeria's Day. This was also a historic performance of Swange music and dance that gathered almost the entire populace of the Republic of France, keenly watching the dance.



Richard Tsevende is another personality who has contributed immensely to Swange music and dance. As a modern Tiv traditional choreographer, he changed the Swange music and dance introduced by Jerry Ugba and Hamma Ula Lisa (Korshima Ula) under Yamuel Yashi to what it is today.

Incidentally, like Boniface Orshio Ada Kever, he taught Swange music not only to Tiv traditional musicians but also to other musicians of high integrity across the entire globe. He

taught Patience Abena Kwakwa from Republic of Ghana and Dr. (Mrs.) Frances Harding from SOAS all who came to Nigeria to learn and study Swange music and dance in 1979.

Tsevende also lectured Swange music and dance at London University to a dancing troupe of a London based International Dancing Company known as Jarlin Linde Hoppers. The director of the company Badejo Peter OBE (Order of British Empire) signed the deal in 1990 during a summer school at the University.

CHAPTER FOUR

Swange Music Songs

ME ÔRU ATSAN A AM

Tyô Ulaga Gbenga

1934 May 7

Tyô Ulaga oo
Me oru atsan a am
Adué u ishima
Ape mtem ne oo

Or ugenegh
Nan a tema
Nan a gbidye
lkyor inya

Tyô Ulaga
A kôrum ga yô
Alu u pase
Me gbidye ikyôr nya
Jonathan Adagher Kajo
Va nôngur mo kyekye
Mkôr ave m hungwa
Ka apera ga

I WILL UNVEIL MY SUFFERINGS

Tyô Ulaga oh
If I unveil my suffereings
You will be fed-up
Where I sit
If another person
Will sit
He will tumble and hit
His head on the ground
Tyô Ulaga

Hold me, otherwise
If you let me go
I will fall headlong

Jonathan Adagher Kajo
Come and park the bicycle for me
To hold my hands and get down
It is not a pretense

IOR VE SEM KPA KWAGH GA

Utuku Agire

1935 July 26

Sem sem (seem-seem)
lor ve sem
Mzende
lor mba
Sen mo o
lor ve sem
Kpa kwagh ga

I hembam oo
lor i sem
Mtene wam
I hembam oo
lor ve sem
Kpa
Kwagh ga

PEOPLE SHOULD LAUGH AT ME, BUT NO PROBLEM

Laugh, laugh
People should laugh at me
As I go about
People are
Laughing at me
They should laugh at me
But no problem

I am overpowered

*People should laugh at me
My age mate's wife (also, wife's age mate)
I am overpowered
People should laugh at me
But
No problem*

ADUE ZENDEN YUM

Senda Gusha (Ngieren Ama Ikwe)

1988 March 7

Aza or a wan mape ga aa
Zer yila wan wou ee
Aza or a kwase mape ga aa
Zer yila
Kwase wou ee
*Adue u zenden yum oo
Zer yila wan wou ee
Adue u zenden yum oo
Zer yila kwase wou ee
Aza or a wan mape ga aa*

ADUE GOES OUT TOO MUCH

She has not taken out anybody's child
Zer call your child
She has not taken out anybody's wife
Zer call
Your wife
*Adue, you go out too much
Zer call your child
Adue, you go out too much
Zer call your wife
She has not taken out anybody's child*

MGBER AMO HEGEN PE ME YA KUNGU AVE

Ior-av Gber Ikyôbo

1968 January 4

Dio Adumbu Koji

Dio Adumbu Koji

Gba nenger a mo ve oo

Mngu a pe zan ze oo

Mgber amo hegen

Pe mo ya kungu ave

Misa Anemba nam

Ken kunya

Ka Anemba agbihim

Ken kunya ye oo

Mama wan Akaahar

Adoo Baje u ngishe

Lu kaa Tômbu ere e

Tômbu a lu ne ade

Ior a gbidyen wen kpa

Ka Tômbu man alu

Zum ve ye ee

Nahan mo kpa mkaan aa Mbatyôyam mer ee

Ne zer timber ashe

Hen pe ne za Biem (Byem)

A ikyegher nduhar yô

Mba shaala

Ve tume Nor o

Abur Nor ambi na kpa

Ne kera ar a mi ze ee

I NOW SING WHEN I WILL ENJOY THE DIVIDENDS

District Officer, Adumbu Koji
District Officer, Adumbu Koji
It is getting beyond my control
I have no place to go

*I now sing
When I will enjoy the dividends
Mr. Anemba has given me
To shame
It is Anemba who has given me
To shame
Mother, daughter of Akaahar*

*Adoo Baje of old
Once told Tômbu clan that
"Tômbu clan if you allow
People to beat him (Adoo Baje)
It is Tômbu clan that
Will be looked upon as feeble"
Therefore, I have likewise tell my kinsfolk that*

*If you continue wasting time
When you should have entered group-hunting
With a worn hoe
Your contemporaries over there
Have killed an elephant
When butchered to share, even the dungs
You will not get*

UGBAGA MBA KÔSUN MO

Neeryum Kaor Cira (Udoo Mbalagh)

1969 June 22

Ape Tsôrun Gbede

U hide ga

Ior ve sem shiniî?

Abunde Tarnôngu

U sha Mbayem

Ugbaga mba kôsun mo

Er m yamen tashi ga oo

Bia kpa m yamen

Sha mbadoon mo

Udoo Mbalagh

We zua a inyaregh yô

De yamen agogo ga

Za, za yam

Liga van nam

Ga yô ka u se pav je ne

Tyôture Zege

Or u Mbaakune

Anôndo A nau

Ya shin am

Ga yô

Orgen ngu ga oo

HARLOTS SLANDER ME

Ape Tsôrun Gbede

Will you not come back;

So that people should deride me?

Abunde Tarnôngu

From Mbayem clan

Harlots slander me

That I don't buy traditional beer

*Even the Western beer, I buy
For the favored ones only
The handsome one of Mbalagh
When you get money
Do not buy wristwatch
Go and buy
A dress, come and give me
Otherwise, that will be our separation*

*Tyôture Zege
Of Mbaakune
May God provide for you,
Eat and remain for me
Otherwise
There is no other person*

ORVANYA KPA KA GBIDI NAN

Ulianyi Ikyurce (Ikyurche)

1936 July

Kyurce terem oo
Orvanya kpa
Ka gbidi nan
Kyurce terem ee
Orvanya ta
Abeda icu (ichur)
*Ulianyi kurce
Orvanya kpa
Ka gbidi nan
Kurce terem oo
Orvanya ta
Abeda icu*

A VISITOR COULD ALSO BE BEATEN

Kyurce my father
A visitor also
Could be beaten (even a visitor can be called to order)
Kyurce my father

A visitor

Has knotted a wrapper (the visitor has curtailed himself)

SE MBA SE LU A NGÔ GA YÔ

Shimenege Agber Ligôm

1994 March 20

Se mba se lu

A ngô ga aa

Or ana se yô ôô

Se ngohol ave ahar

Se mba se lu

A ngô ga yô

Or ana se

Se ngohol ave ahar

WE THAT ARE MOTHERLESS

We that are

Motherless

When made an offer

With two hands, we will receive

ME PAV A ICAN (ICHAN)

Neeryum Kaor Cira (Udoo Mbalagh)

1972 December 14

Mbaiorga Usaka

Usaka ka mea

Nenge a we

Kwagh a hômom ga

Kpa mse tegheree

Anom Abayo ka ie ga

Myiran we ye o

Abunde Tarnôngu

Hemen mo gbenda

Mza lam a

Madam Helen wan Adi

Misa Cen (Chen) a oo

*Lukor Agbo yem
Ngu shin Makurdi
Weragida ngôm
Wan Mbaterem
Anjembe ngu her
Me pav a can aa
Weragida
Juliana Anjembe
Ka ie ga oo*

I WILL SEPARATE FROM POVERTY

Mbaiorga Usaka
Usaka when
I see you
Even when nothing is funny
I smile calmly
Anom Abayo, it's not a lie
That's why I call on you
*Abunde Tarnôngu
Lead me
To go talk to
Madam Helen, daughter of Adi
Mr. Chen
Lukor Agbo has gone
He stays in Makurdi*

*First wife, my mother
Daughter of Mbaterem
Anjembe is present
I will separate from poverty
First wife
Juliana Anjembe
It is not a lie*

MYAMEN BIA GA

Neeryum Kaor Cira (Udoo Mbalagh)

1976 April 18

Ape Tsôrun Gbede
Kpatur Tiaku Gbaya
Cinge (Chinge) Yegh Aka
Yô er inja ne ga oo

*Onkasev mba kaan er
M yamen bia ga oo
Mo myamen tashi ga oo
We ayam yô too nam a*

*Ka we yam a na
Ama a bee
Ageman u yemen
Er m na Naira*

*Mvenda mo na inja la ga
Orngu Yaji oo
Alu u yam gbaga bia
Maan a nan*

*Nan a too
U too
Nan a mem
U mem ee*

*Nan a mou u
Na inyaregh aa
Ape Tsôrun Gbede yô
Er inja ne ga a*

I DON'T BUY BEER

Ape Tsôrun Gbede
Kpatur Tiaku Gbaya
Cinge (Chinge) Yegh Aka
Does not say so

*Young girls are saying that
I don't buy beer
I don't buy traditional beer
If you buy, pour it for me*

*When you buy and give and
They finish drinking
And it is time to go
They demand for Naira (money)*

*I refuse to give Naira
Orngu Yaji
When you buy beer for a prostitute
Drink with her
When she pours
Pour as well
If she rests
Rest as well*

*As she leaves
You give money
Ape Tsôrun Gbede
Does not say so*

ALOM ZUA JENDE A NOR

Neeryum Kaor Cira (Udoo Mbalagh)

1972 July 17

Imbya kwagh i
Can i tserem ne
Alu er or a yimam yô
Me lu kpan u nana a

Mbaiorga Usaka Aguji
Iyô ibo
I sha Tse-Mker
Can sôngum ôô

Sha mimi Alom zua ijende a Nor
Mo kpa mnyôr i yam a ior
Me ior ve nengen
Sha er mtseen ye

Maakyel Anjembe
Akawe u vesen e
U a nengen sha
Naira je kpa

Shi lamén a mo stemberee
Er, mo mwa
Imo zan zan
Akaa er mde memen ga

Sopavaisa
Misa Daniel a oo
Yamem bia
Mo ma

Mo er ligima
Mo (me) de imo (imyô) geveer
Wan Ibyer Agera

Wan Tômbu Mama

HARE HAS MADE FRIENDSHIP WITH ELEPHANT

This type of
Poverty that is upon me
If anyone saves me
I will be his slave

Mbaiorga Usaka Aguji
The dangerous snake
At Tse-Mker
Poverty has slaughtered me

Truly, hare has made friendship with elephant
Me too, I have made mine with people
That people should see
As I spick-and-span often

Michael Anjembe
Senior secretary
That looks after
Even Naira

Still talks to me freely
That I should sing
Song continuously
He says I should not stop

Supervisor
Mr. Daniel
Buy beer for me
Let me drink

And boast
And stop belching with song
Daughter of Ibyer Agera

Mother, daughter of Tômbu

M WAR A OR GA

Yamuel Yashi Agbatar Gyur

1946 March 23

Senda u wam
Yav shinii?
Senda u wam
Yav shinii?
Me pine Senda oo
U wam yav shinii?
Anayaka (Wan-Ayaka) bumem
M war a or ga aa

Senda u wam
Yav shinii?
Senda u wam
Yav shinii?
Me pine Senda oo
U wam yav shinii?
Anayaka bumem
A war a or ga aa

I DON'T BLAME ANYBODY

Senda have you
Impregnated me?
I will interrogate Senda
Have you impregnated me?
Daughter of Ayaka has deceived me
I don't blame anybody

ÔR NEN A TER AÔNDO A LUMUN A IMO YAM

Neeryum Kaor Cira (Udoo Mbalagh)

1963 November 19

Ku Saimon Ugba
Mo kwagh u a zem iyol
Mo (me) pase ior mba hen Tar wam
Ka or a kpe ve nan ya Tor
Mo i nam ú wam me ya zwa wam aa

*Ôr nen a Ter Aôndo
A lumun a imo yam
Mbazan Jôv Mama oo
Mama kaa er or udoon or u Mbalagh
Awa imo a ter Maakyar
Misa Anjembe Akawe u
Dôbur jee a ungwa er
M dughun imo yô
Misa Agbo oo
Lukor Agbo nam wundu man akôv*

*Ka lun mo er yange ior a gema ôrun
Er mfa imo i Gbanyi i gberen yô
Mpase Gbafan Cen (Chen) u Kuna
Or-Mbajôr Ger, alu u sember
Ican a yam kôv ôô*

*Aniwyia apirashe
Gbem lu a nongu mayange ga
Tyôture Zege Or-Mbaakune
Tar nam ikyur hen hyura yô
Mo kwagh hembam aa*

KWAGH ER OR UDOON

Neeryum Kaor Cira (Udoo Mbalagh)

1974

Kwagh er or udoon ee

Ku wuam aaaaaaa

Ankwagh er or udoon oo

Ku wuam aaaaaaa oo

Kwagh er or udoon ee

Ku wuam aaaaaaa

Ankwagh er or udoon oo

Ku wuam aaaaaaa

Mkaa mer orkyegh

Te taya ga

Orkyegh hua sheti

Kighir koti sha mi

Orkyegh te taya ga

Orkyegh hua sheti

A kighir koti

Orkyegh te taya ga aa

SOMETHING HAS HAPPENED TO A HANSOME MAN

Something has happened to a handsome man

Death has killed me

A thing has happened to a handsome man

Death has killed me

I say a man with a protruded goiter

Does not put on a necktie

The man with a protruded goiter wore a shirt

With a jacket on top

*A man with a protruded goiter does not put on a necktie
The man with a protruded goiter wore a shirt
With a jacket on top
A man with a protruded goiter does not put on a necktie*

KA AÔNDO A HEMBE YE

Yamuel Yashi Agbatar Gyur

1970

Asom Shande oo
lor mba ve wuhugh
Mbela ve hemva ga
Ka Aôndo A hembe ye
Kwagh a de vihin we ze ee
Ita nomkpevev iju yô
Mbayôngu ember
Man i tume
Nom yôngu nguhar yô
Kpevev ase ase

IT IS GOD THAT IS ABOVE ALL

Asom Shande
Those that put you in prison
They are not above all
It is God who is above all
Do not feel bad at all
The he-goat has been poked
The sheep rejoiced
The ram has now been kicked
Let the he-goat also laugh

GONGORO TSONGUR MO

Christopher Ature Hom

1984 February 20

Tsongur mo oo

A tsongur mo oo

Me due me

Nyôr tazi ee

Gongoro tsongur mo oo

Me due me

Nyor tazi ee

Gonoro tsongur mo oo

Tsongur mo oo

Me due

Me nyôr

Tazi oo

A LORRY SHOOK ME

Shook me

It shook me

I will drop and

Board a taxi

A lorry shook me

I will drop and

Board a taxi

The lorry shook me

M NYÔR TAZI

Adema Gbyughur (Gbuur)

1946

Gudam gongoro oo

Gongoro fa atindi

Gudam gongoro oo

Gongoro fa atindi

Gudam gongoro oo

Mnyôr tazi

Kar ayem amo

Ngu yemen shin tingir

Biriki kpa ami ga yô lanem a

Orya gudam gongoro, gongoro fa atindi

I BOARDED A TAXI

Better a lorry

Lorries know rules

Better a lorry

Lorries know rules

Better a lorry

I boarded a taxi

Over speeding with me

Heading to a ditch

Without brakes and I wonder

Husband, better a lorry, the lorry knows rules

KWAGH HEMBAM ME ZA KOHOL GBAGA

Iortim Ikya Genyi (Ucikpôôkô)

1979 August 12

Kwagh hembam

Me za kohol gbaga

Kwagh hembam

Me za kohol gbaga

lor ne i gbam sôngun tsô

lor ne i gbam sôngun tsô

Demvihin u lorbo

M zenden kpa

M tagher m nenge

Or ngu a ya iti er

M ngu hembra-Tyô ga oo

Wan Mbayongu Kwase wam aa

I WILL GO AND MEET A HARLOT

I am desperate

I will go and meet a harlot

I am desperate

I will go and meet a harlot

These people should rather slaughter me

These people should rather slaughter me

Demvihin wife of lorbo

I do travel, but

I have never seen

A person bear a name that

I am Greater-than-Clan

Daughter of Mbayongu, my wife

TAR GBA NUM A MO

Neeryum Kaor Cira (Udoo Mbalagh)

1963 February 14

Agbo we ga yô

Mo kpa me lug a

Ka u henen ga

Or u sha kpav m vaa

Ayange me kpe tsô

A wanger can

U cirin mo

Davidi Wuam Gambe Dajo

Wan Mbagben

Ican a wuam

Kpa me war ga

Tar gba num a mo oo

THE WORLD HAS FORSAKEN ME

Agbo, if it were not you

I would not be alive

It is not contemplation

Man from Kpav, should I cry?

Well, when I die

Poverty will stop

Intimidating me

Davidi Wuam Gambe Dajo

Of Mbagben

Poverty may kill me

But I will not complain

The world has forsaken me

CAN A WUAM IOR A SEM ZE

Neeryum Kaor Cira (Udoo Mbalagh)

1963 December 4

Davidi Gambe Dajo

Can a wuam

Ior a sem ze ee

Wan Amoaïor wam oo

Can ier a mo mkungu

Er ka ivue

Mama wam Mbakperan Aganyi

Mgba iyol a can ve

Itsendem azer sha ishi

I lum dang ye.

Cira terem oo

Tar tam aco

Kaor terem oo

Can a wuam a

Mcivir Inyô Côghur oo

Torkegh Iwail (Iwya-il)

Tar u kôhom ashe

Nenge Mbakperan Aganyi

Yan' lu ve amo

Kpa can ne cihin mo ze oo

Can tôôm kyav

Can tôôm kyav

Wan Amoaïor Ukum wam aa

Sopavaïsa, Misa Daniee a oo

Wan Ibyer Agera

Tar sem

zan zan zan

Yô can i kur a mo veoo

WHEN POVERTY KILLS ME

Davidi Gambe Dajo

When poverty kills me

People will not laugh at me

My dear daughter of Amoaio

Poverty has made me whitish (bankrupt)

Like chalk

My mother Mbakperan Aganyi

I have romanced with poverty that's why

It has spit on my face

That I am needy

Cira, my father

The world has treated me with servitude

Kaor, my father

Poverty will kill me

I respect Innocent Coghur;

Torqueh Iwail,

The world has looked at me scornfully

In fact, Mbakperan Aganyi

When she was with me

Poverty did not dare me

Now poverty has yoked me

Poverty has yoked me

My dear daughter of Amoaio from Ukum

Supervisor, Mr. Daniel

Daughter of Ibyer Agera

The world has laughed at me

Continuously that

Poverty has finished me

FA IKON ATI

Utuku Agire

Fa ikon ati orwam fa ikon ati
Fa ikon ati orwam fa ikon ati
Fa ikon ati orwam fa ikon ati

Fa ikon ati gbaaye, jiagba
Kuegh é irkwar
Liemen, akinde o Koondo

Irkwar, maku ngula o
Kpiyegh, mho o
Irkwar

KNOW TREES BY NAMES

Know trees by names, my friend know trees by names

Know trees by names: gbaaye, jiagba
Kuegh é irkwar
Liemen, akinde, Koondo

Irkwar, look at maku
Kpiyegh, mho
Irkwar

OR WUAN MJIRIM NAN BEEN VE NAN KAHAN SULE GA

Yamuel Yashi

1964 May 9

Tar hembam
Mo (me) vaa oo
Tar hembam
Mo vaa oo
Mliam kpa ma hough mo ze é

Tor Yogbo Tsafa
Mngu é fa or
Wuan mjirim nan been ve
Nan kahan sule ga

Zaki Yogbo Tsafa
Mngu é fa or
Wuan mjirim nan been ve
Nan kahan sule ga
Tar hembam
M vaan ye
Mliam kpa ma
Hough mo zé

NOBODY FINISHES KILLING MNJIRIM BEFORE FARMING

I am desperate
Let me cry
I am desperate
Let me cry
Never have I gotten used to crying
King Yogbo Tsafa
I have never known a person
Who kills all mjirim-flies before
Farming

King Yogbo Tsafa
I have never known a person
Who kills all mjirim-flies before
Farming
I am desperate that is why
I am crying
Never have I gotten
Used to crying

MO KPA MAN MLU ORKWAOR

Joseph Asongu Tor

1976

Mo kpa man mlu ordoon oo
Mo kpa man mlu ordoon oo
Mo kpa man mlu orkwaor oo

Kwagh hembam yô
Nyaregh ke' we' yum ga
Mo kpa man mlu ordoon oo

Chan erém
Nyaregh ke' we' yum ga
Mo kpa man mlu orkwaor oo

I WOULD HAVE ALSO BEEN A MAN OF FASHION

I would have also been a handsome person
I would have also been a man of fashion

I am desperate because
I have no much money in hand otherwise
I would have also been a handsome person

Poverty has dealt with me that
I have no much money in hand otherwise
I would have also been a man of fashion

TÔÔM ORAGUGU

Utuku Agire

1976 July 12

Tôôm oragugu tôôm

Tôôm oragugu tôôm

Tôôm mé oragugu tôôm ée

Nomou' kpe shin m toou wé'

Kikye yam ka í tôôn kwase ga

Alu tugh yo ma' mteeú wé'

CARRY ME MOTORCYCLIST

Carry me, motorcyclist carry me

Is your husband dead that I should carry you?

My bicycle is not for carrying women

If it were at night, I would have carried you.

KWAMBE HAR MINDI IVYAMBE ISHE

Neeryum Kaor Cira (Udoo Mbalagh)

Kwaghnzuur Naaikyo

Ter Aôndo kar kwar á nam

Doo ôrun ga kpa ne lan ga

Kyondú ngi ze ée

Ka injar mato í lum ga

Shi man mze Lobi ne én

Kwambe har mindi ivyambe ishe ne

Tiv vande orun ka á inja kwagh é

Or afa ga nán a pine

Abunde Tarnongu ún a pase nán

Ape Tsôrun ka mer é msen

Me Denis Akputu

Sesilia Vembe
Aôndo Ter a na ne ya shi nam
Lukor Agbo oo
Ka yemen yam zende chaá

Or ú ya wam Samuel Hundu
Er mza yô me za
lorbume Ankpan
Inyom ne í er amo

Vihi gande ôrun
Zever Mngu Kyura
Angbian ú ôr
Me ungwa oo

TWO MISTAKES GOUGE IVAMBE

Kwaghnzuur Naaikyo
Lord God has shared and given me unfairly
It is too bad to mention it but you are aware
I don't even have cloth
 It is because I don't have transportation fare
 I would have traveled to Lobi (Makurdi)
 Two mistakes gouge Ivambe
 Tiv said this proverb

Anybody that does not know should ask
Abunde Tarnongu to tell him
Ape Tsôrun, I pray
That Dennis Akputu

Cecilia Vembe

Father God should give you to eat and give me also
Lukor Agbo
I am now traveling to a far place

My head of family, Samuel Hundu
Requested that I should pay him a visit
Iorburne Ankpan
This year has badly dealt with me

Too bad to mention
Zever Mngu Kyura
Brother, if you talk
I will listen

ME KPE I WANGE IOR MBA VE LU IHOM A MO LA

Neeryum Kaor Cira (Udoo Mbalagh)

1971 June 28

Shawon ganden oo

Tar hurem oo

Wan Ukum wam oo oo o

Tar ú tam zero man

Ka ú me va devaan je ze oo

Lydia kwase wam aan

Tar ka anishegh

U tsegham ga

Mlu inja er mngu wan ga ye

Misa Agbo me kpe oo

Mo me kpe í wanger

Iormba ve lu iyongu a mo la

Ichan kpa í beem sha é

Misa Agbo me kpe oo

Mo me kpe í wanger

Iormba ve lu hyom amo la

Ichán kpa í beem sha
Mbakperan Aganyi
Mwa imo sha itsombotar oo
Mama Mbakperan Aganyi
Due yô iyange mire

Kough member ye
Supavaisa
Chan á wuam oo
Mbayugh Mama aan

I WILL DIE TO MAKE MY ENEMIES HAPPY

I am disappointed with life
The world has shut me up
My dear daughter of Ukum
The world has tossed me about grudgingly
Eventually, I cannot stop crying

Lydia my wife
The world is a native gallon
You have not designed me
That's why I am not like a son

Mr. Agbo, I will die
I will die, let it finish
People that hold enmity against me
Poverty should also finish

Mbakperan Aganyi
I sing at the world's headquarters (implies, I sing in Gboko)
Mama Mbakperan Aganyi
Appeared and the Sun set prematurely

Set prematurely
Supervisor
Poverty will kill me
Mother Mbayugh

M NENGE A NAIRA U JOSEPH AKAA AGBO KPILE GA

Neeryum Kaor Cira (Udoo Mbalagh)

1973 December 29

Mbaiorga Usaka Aguji

Ka ne mba alu

Kwagh a kôrum me ngor ikyenge

Mo yila Usaka Aguji

Hen ihongu je ne

Usaka va perem oo

Nôngu er ne wam amar a

Mza shin Makurdi

James Ikyereve Akombu Utegi

Nam Naira u Mutala

Nam Naira ugen ne ka Abubakar je la

Myengen yô

Mnenge á Naira ú Joseph Akaahan Agbo Kpile mayang'
ga

Abundu ga je kpa fiiti kobo yô

Man ilu Akaahan Agbo Kpile

Rebecca, wan fan ngô

Mo yô tar u hembam

Kpa ka ken we mver ashe ye

Maikyel Anjembe

Akawe yang' za hen

Udigirii mba kposu-kposu

Gema mbagen na mba hen Madam Juli

Pande mbagen na wan Mbagen Tyav Nyam Atsor

Hile ngu zenden a mi ke' ityo

Orchivirigh wase Tor Tiv Akperan Orshi Kur

Tema ngu sôrun se tar

Atoni janara tema ngula Maikyel Anjembe
Ichan a dem ga
Me de ugberen imo teren we ga saa Udam ade ibyôr
Me mem gberen imo teren we ye

Mgema gberen sha mba Ngôr-Ngôr
Sha mba Brijet Gbagir
Gbagir er amo dedoo sha inja
Er anigbian wou la yange vande eren

Sha Mbape ka me' nyôr tugh kpa
Mdue' kyagh Naira kughung
Kpa ilu hen
Mbape tor

Denis Zeka alu a
Ishima na her
Ter Aôndo Alumun yô
Alu amo her zan zan

Madam Nguseer wan Nanev Kwande
Ôr kwagh er orya wam á
Imo ne se kimbir Abaji
Me za sha u Kuna shaara

Me za he' Patrik Adigam
He' pe ka me nyôr ichan í chia la
Me za tema imôngo a Patrik Adigam
Chan á dem eé

I HAVE NOT SEEN JOSEPH AKAAHAN AGBO KPILE'S NAIRA

Mbaiorga Usaka Aguji

It is you that

When I am in trouble

I will call Usaka Aguji

At the River pool

Usaka come and help me cross

Try and fix a dance for me

I went to Makurdi

James Ikyereve Akombu Utegi

Gave me Murtala's Naira

Another Naira with Abubakar

When I checked

I did not see Joseph Akaahan Agbo Kpile's Naira at
all

At least, fifty kobo

Should have been Akaahan Agbo Kpile

Rebecca, a child knows his mother

As for me, I have been disappointed by the world

But my hope is on you

Michael Anjembe

Secretary, acquired

Different academic degrees

He has given some in the care of Madam Juliet

He has given others to daughter of Mbagen Tyav

Nyam Atsor

And is going about with some in his head

His Royal Highness, King of Tiv Akperan Orshi Kur
Sits on the throne ruling the nation well

Look at Attorney General siting, Michael Anjembe
If poverty does not leave me
I will not stop mentioning you in my song except
Udam people stop using underwear
I would stop mentioning you in my song

I now mention only the rich
Such as Bridget Gbajir
Gbagir treat me very well
Like your brother did to me before

In Mbape, when I get there even at night
I come back with wades of Naira plentifully
It is always from
Daughter of Mbape King

Dennis Zeka should continue to have
His heart
Father God willing
May He be with him forever

Madam Nguseer daughter of Nanev Kwande
Said something that my husband
This song, we shall celebrate it again
I will go to Kunav

I will visit Patrik Adigam
Where when I go, poverty is afraid
I will go and entertain Patrick Adigam
Poverty will leave me

Appendices



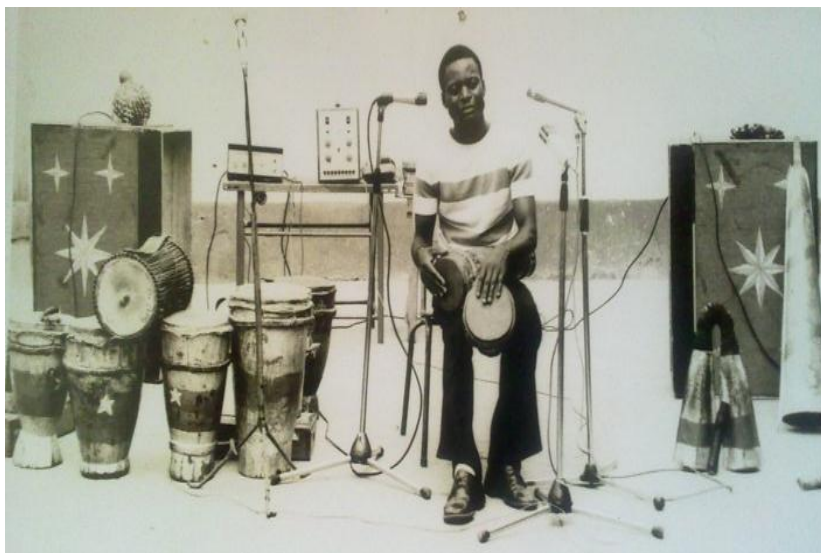
Boniface Orshio Ada Kever blowing his Gida, 1976



The Director of Benue Council for Arts and Culture introducing the Award Winning Swange Band in Tel Aviv-Jaffo August 22, 1999



Benue Council for Arts and Culture Award Winning Swange Band
in New Delhi India 2008



The best backup Swange drummer 1976 displaying his talent



Crowd of Israeli populace watching Swange music performed by Benue Council for Arts and Culture Award Winning Swange Band in Tel Aviv-Jaffo August 23, 1999



A Jewish Swange music fan (middle) participating in Swange dance with Benue Council for Arts and Culture Award Winning Swange Band in Tel Aviv-Jaffo August 23, 1999



Ron Huldai, Mayor of Tel Aviv. The first Mayor to dance in the public with the Benue Council for Arts and Culture Award Winning Swange Band in Tel Aviv-Jaffo, Israel August 22, 1999



Some of the Swange pioneers. *From left to right:* King One Abua, Chief Commander Mike Mbatyelevde Matar JP and Christopher Ature Hom Agena. Photo by Tim Cuttings June 12, 2012 during Mike Mbatyelevde's Album launching at Gboko Club in Gboko

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